



The final *stretch*

Creating peace & reconciliation

◆ South Africa's
white witches

◆ Pacifists vs
Pinochet

◆ Northern Ireland
– life on the run

IN THE RUN-UP TO THE COLOGNE SUMMIT of rich-country leaders in June, the **NI** revisits the growing scandal of 'Third World' debt – and the **JUBILEE 2000 CAMPAIGN** for 'a debt-free start to the next millennium for a billion people'. We'll be giving you a full briefing – the facts, the figures, the arguments, the human stories and the contacts you'll need to defeat the dictatorship of debt.

- ◆ **Simple life** Credit cards and collapse; a cautionary tale
- ◆ **Take the hit!** Why odious debts contracted by despots are not owed by their victims
- ◆ **Scrap metal jacket** The making of another war on Vietnam
- ◆ **Debtspeak** a pocket guide
- ◆ **The Ocean of Debt** Stormy waters: the facts
- ◆ **Debts to history** How it all began
- ◆ **Jubilee!** Where it came from, and where it's going

- ◆ **Eating the machete** Hurricane Mitch, the mud and the money; a report from Nicaragua
- ◆ **A tale of two cities** Lusaka and London; how Zambians pay the price of copper on world markets
- ◆ **You owe us!** An indigenous leader demands the return of Latin American gold
- ◆ **War games** How bailouts in the North and bankruptcy in the South are designed to produce just one result



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The New Internationalist exists to report on the issues of world poverty and inequality; to focus attention on the unjust relationship between the powerful and powerless in both rich and poor nations; to debate and campaign for the radical changes necessary within and between those nations if the basic material and spiritual needs of all are to be met; and to bring to life the people, the ideas and the action in the fight for world development.

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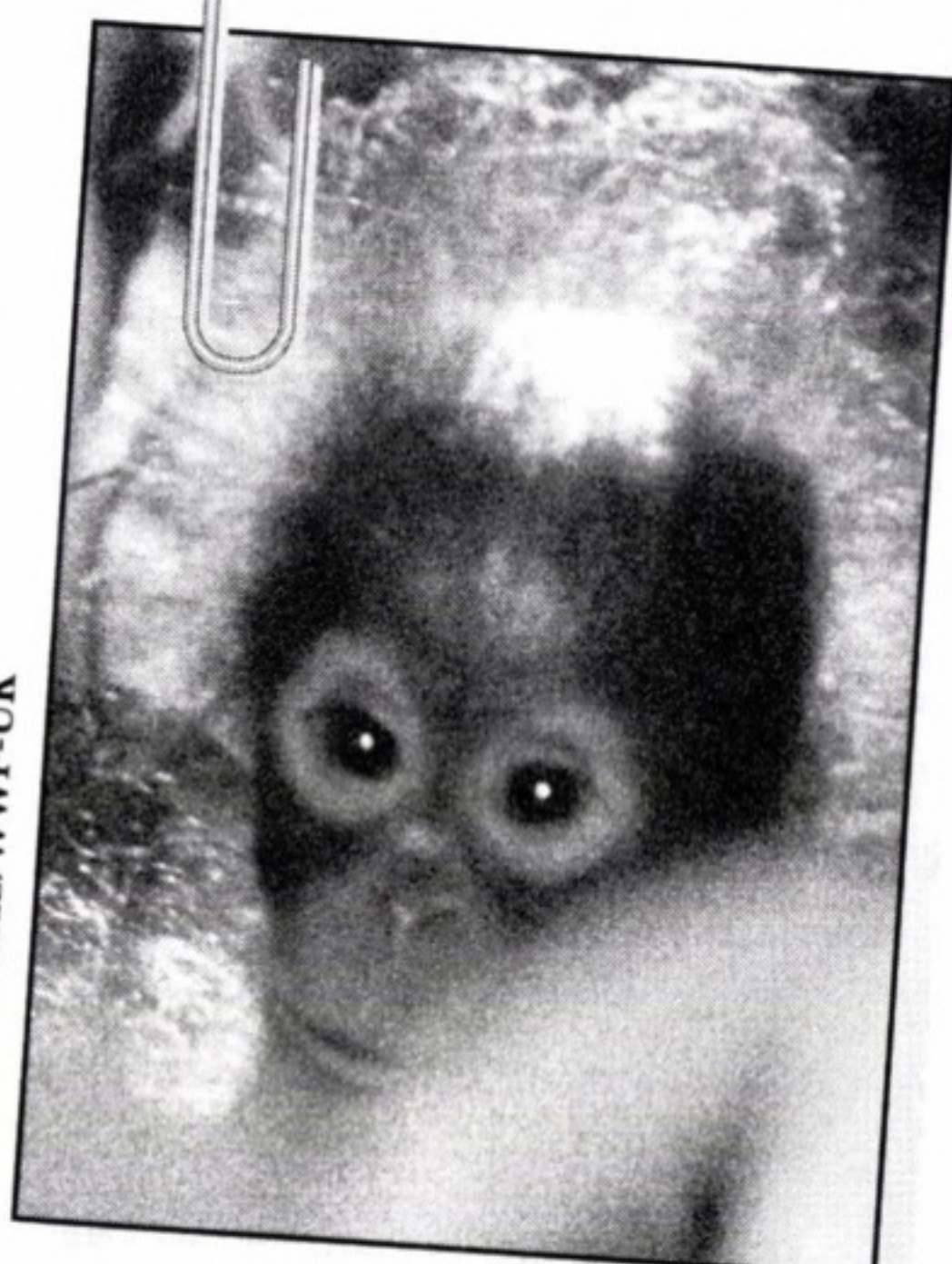


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THIS MONTH'S THEME

Peace & Reconciliation

FROM THIS MONTH'S EDITOR

PEOPLE in Bougainville will tell you a horrific story – like how they killed someone – and laugh about it,' said a Western aid worker incredulously about the Bougainvilleans, who have just come out of a nine-year war.

'Oh, I can relate to that,' I replied. 'I know because I laugh a lot. It's a great way of relieving tension.' On the editorial floor of the NI's British office in Oxford, the other editors have become accustomed to my laughs out loud, but to myself – often about subjects that do not appear to the vast majority of people as 'funny'.

In Bougainville and Northern Ireland, where I went to explore the progress of peace, I had many long laughs at both the hilarious and the tragic. And in each place I found a sense of humour was just one tool people use to shine through the sadness. Everyone develops their own sources of hope – even in the soggy rain-filled days of Northern Ireland's

winter, as one chatty cabbie explained to me.

'I love the weather here,' he enthused.

'You're mad!' I exclaimed above the sound of the pouring rain on the car roof.

'I do; I like the cold. We had one day in the summer when it got *really, really hot* [a mere 25 degrees Celsius] and I couldn't do anything, I couldn't go to work 'cause all I did was sweat in the car, like. It was horrible... And I love the rain.'

'The rain ?!?!'

'Yeah, I love to go out for walks in the rain. 'Cause, like, when you're at home Daddy's not allowed to get upset. Can't have the kids seeing you mad or sad like. So you got to get out and go for a walk. But if the weather's good, people stop you in the street and say "Oh Kieran,

how you doing?" like and you can't get a moment's peace. But when it's raining there's no one out 'cept you and you can just walk and walk and think things through.'

Laughing too much, walking in the rain – we all have ways of keeping ourselves warm when the chilling effects of violence and war threaten to make us freeze over; making us cold enough not to care about human life. But no matter how much violence is glamorized – from Joan of Arc to Arnie Schwarzenegger – if you ask someone to describe the most scary person imaginable they will say 'cold, unfeeling, automatic killers'.

But let's not allow the fact that we are warm-blooded make us fuzzy-headed. If we want to get serious about creating peace and reconciliation it's going to take as much action, courage and warmth as we can muster. And since the world as we know it is violent, change is going to require a bit of 'insanity' as well. Laying down arms is an act of 'victory' not 'surrender'. Peace and reconciliation do not mean 'giving up' but battling on without using violence as a crutch.

In the words of one Ogoni protester in Nigeria: 'We are going to fight for our rights peacefully and non-violently – and we shall win.'



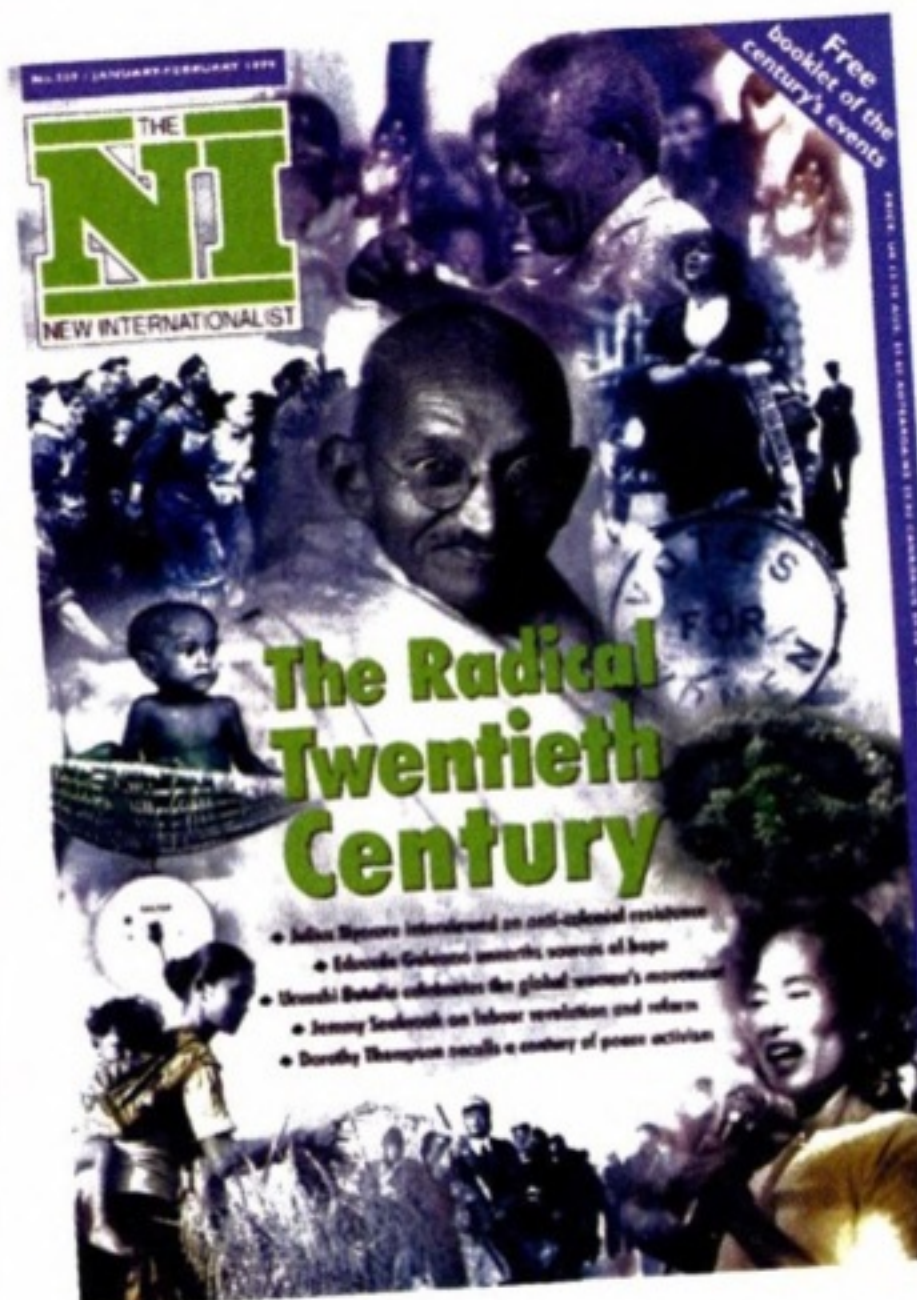
Anouk Ride
for the New Internationalist Co-operative

Letters

Balkan blunder

Issue 309 (*The Radical Twentieth Century*) commits a blunder which I would have expected the NI to avoid.

'Serbian' means 'of the country/state of Serbia' whereas 'Serb' is an ethnic term,



usually indicating an Orthodox Christian South Slav using particular dialectal words of the Serbo-Croat language.

Therefore the sentence at the bottom of Page 38: 'ethnic Albanians in Kosovo became the latest victims of Serb oppression' implies that Serbs are somehow a more brutal race. Such comments risk oversimplifying the Balkan tragedy. Serbs in Croatia were murdered in their hundreds. They were driven from land occupied by Serbs for centuries in their hundreds of thousands. Serbs in Bosnia – while undoubtedly responsible for most atrocities – were also victims, as evidenced by some of the Croats and Muslims wanted for war crimes. Although the vast majority of atrocities in Kosovo have been committed by Yugoslavian and Serbian (therefore mostly Serb) soldiers and police, there have been many reports of innocent Serb civilians being murdered or driven from their land.

Stephen Pratt
Wincanton, England

Credit due

In your article 'Capital and kindness' ('Update' NI 308). I was surprised that you referred to the results of a doctoral study that alleges two-thirds of the



The **New Internationalist** welcomes your letters. But please keep them short. They may be edited for purposes of space or clarity. Include a home telephone number if possible and send your letters to the nearest editorial office. The address and e-mail are inside the front cover.

microcredit loans made to women are not controlled by them, when there are a number of much more comprehensive studies. For example, a study by Goetz and Gupta looks at four microcredit programs in Bangladesh and found that an average of 39 per cent of women they studied had little or no control over the use of the loan. For Grameen they found ten per cent of borrowers had little or no control over loan use. While these figures are quite high, they still indicate that the majority of borrowers have partial or full control over their loans. For women in Bangladesh that is a significant improvement on the opportunities for self-advancement they had prior to these loans.

I agree that microfinance is not the only solution to poverty. But the Grameen and other microfinance institutions have given many poor people the opportunity to lift themselves out of poverty. In fact a recent World Bank study has shown that the loans provided by the Grameen have helped a third of

its borrowers cross the poverty line and another third are close to crossing it as well. Let's give credit where credit is due!

Stav Zotalis
Reid ACT 2612 Australia

No basis

It is a pity that R Westmass spoilt his/her letter (NI 308) with historical inaccuracies. Kuwait has been an autonomous sheikhdom since the eighteenth century and a British protectorate from 1897 until 1961. Iraq was created as a kingdom after the First World War as a part of the dismemberment of the 500-year-old Ottoman Empire. It was administered by the British until 1932. There is no substantial evidence that the Kuwaitis wish to be ruled by Saddam Hussein and no basis for classifying Kuwait as Iraqi territory.

Cy Chadley
London, England

Accident

Your article 'Wrong Way' ('Update' NI 308) criticizes the Red Cross/Red Crescent's *World*

Disasters Report 1998 for disregarding Third World views on traffic problems in the chapter on road safety. But you have picked up only half the story.

In 1998, the *World Disasters Report* did call for attention to road and car design in order to improve road safety. But one of its main points was that most victims – especially in the Third World – are not car drivers. They are either pedestrians, bicyclists or in buses. The issue is how to stop cars killing and maiming.

Both practical experience and research shows that changing the behaviour patterns of road users, whether they be drivers or pedestrians, takes many years. Engineering changes, however, can save lives now. The critical issue though is for governments to recognize the growing human and economic cost of road accidents. They are as big a threat as any other human-made catastrophe and kill far more people each year than wars do.

Peter Walker
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Geneva, Switzerland

Green guerrillas

Referring to your Red/Green issue (NI 307) I would like to mention a lesser-known aspect of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Though bright Red on the outside, they are deeply Green in the middle. As the FARC has been fighting its battle for half a century and is now strong enough to force the Colombia Government into negotiations regarding the social structure of the country, this gives a spark of hope to those of us working in the environmental movement in Colombia. FARC produces an 'ecological bulletin' which they hand out in the countryside setting out rules on all the most vital Green issues – not felling forests, not burning, not using dynamite in rivers and lakes, not fouling or drying up waterways etc.

Unfortunately the other guerrilla movement in the country, the National Liberation Army (ELN) with very good political but very bad environmental reasoning, regularly blows up oil

Found wanting

I enjoyed your issue on the *Radical Twentieth century* (NI 309). However, I think you and Julius Nyerere should double check your quotations (Page 14). The famous statement 'The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and left untried' is from GK Chesterton (a Catholic) and not the humanist George Bernard Shaw. The same observation can, I am sure, be applied to most ideologies, which is why we have governments of left, right and centre abandoning ideology for a lukewarm New Pragmatism.

Patrick Ballin
Brighton, England



pipelines with hideous results. After a recent terrible disaster, where 70 peasants burned to death when the spilled oil caught fire, there are green noises emitting from this movement too.

I am so glad you have aired the Red/Green issue, as anyone working seriously at ground level must know that capitalism is a sick joke where environmental survival is concerned.

Jenny James
Atlantis, Colombia

Transformative justice

A friend lent me his copy of *Rush to Punishment* (NI 282). Given that this is my lifelong concern, I postponed wading into it, partly expecting you to scratch too shallowly the surface and partly dreading reading the same sad truths again. But you have hit high and low spots in a very balanced way, and included historic leaders like Nils Christie and Jerome Miller.

Could you please add our organization Rittenhouse as a resource? We support 'transformative justice' which uses crime as an opportunity to empower victims, offenders and community towards a social transformation. Our focus is public education and methods that empower the community instead of the corporate dominated state. We are currently planning a conference in May 2000. Tel: +1 416 538 6900 or +1 416 630 7581. Fax: +1 416 740 538 2655.

Ruth Morris
Ontario, Canada

Pen friends

The art of letter-writing is often said to be dead but I must disagree. I have found pen-friendship to be a rewarding and inexpensive hobby which caters for all ages, creeds and culture and expands my knowledge of the world and its people. Readers wishing further details should write (enclosing an sae) to me at: 55 Green Leys, St Ives, Cambs. PE 17 4SB.

E Hardy
St Ives, England

The views expressed on the letters page are not necessarily those of the New Internationalist.



Letter from Mongolia

AT THE END of a romantic evening, Bilguun tenderly called me his 'ugly Louisa'. I was a bit taken aback as he was my lover and had his arms around me at the time. But when I complained to a couple of Mongolian friends at work the next morning, they simultaneously burst out laughing.

'Oh! He only said that because he loves you!'

The Mongolian word for ugly (*muhai*) also, in the right context, means 'darling'.

Since then, I have moved west to the Mongolian mountains – and my Mongolian has improved considerably. So when I found out that one of my neighbours here in Tsengel is called *Mene* (many) and his wife's name is *Cow*, I couldn't resist giving my friends a Mongolian translation. Here, if you have many cows (or yaks or camels), you are rich, which *Mene* incidentally is.

But it is the literal meaning of Mongolian names and the reason they are given in the first place which is really tantalizing. My teaching counterpart is *Gansukh* (Steel Axe). Her husband is *Sansar-Huu*, which translates as 'Son of the Cosmos'. One of *Gansukh*'s students is *Zerleg*, which means 'savage' or 'barbarian'. And I have a student called *Chudruck*, or *Fist*. Then there is poor *Neer-Gui*, whose name is 'No-name'. *Neer-Gui* sits next to *Butta-kuz*, or *Camel-eyes*. *Sazug* meanwhile sits at the back of the class which may be the best place for him, as his name means 'smelly'.

I quizzed Steel Axe one day about these bewildering names.

'Why would anyone call their child "Camel-eyes"?'

'Have you ever looked at a camel's eyes?' she replied. 'They're beautiful'.

It's true – Tsengel is full of long-lashed, coy-eyed camels. So *Butta-kuz* is really quite a compliment. As for *Smelly*, that took a bit more unravelling. 'It's affectionate,' said Steel Axe. 'No-one thinks it is offensive. As a name, in Mongolia, it actually implies that he smells quite nice.' (I thought of Bilguun, and my being ugly and beloved.)

This is good news for another student, ten-year-old *Zolbin* (Stray) who Steel Axe assured me is a very loved child.

Zerleg was given his savage name to bring him strength. It's a way of asking the gods to protect him, as is the name *Fist*. But Steel Axe became very sombre when we got around to discussing *Neer-Gui*.

'She had four or five brothers who all died young. Her family begged the *lama* (Buddhist

In the eye of the beholder

Louisa Waugh finds that people's names are not always what they seem....

monk) for a name that wouldn't anger or insult our Buddhist deities. He advised them to call her *No-name*. It's a humble name and she's a healthy child!'

Steel Axe has four brothers and sisters who all have names with a similar meaning to hers, symbolizing strength and might. Her own son is called *Yalvita* (Victory) while her daughter is named after a medicinal plant. Many girls have the word *Tsetseg* (Flower) in their names, while the male-only name *Buga* (Bull) speaks for itself.

Parents hoping for a son often give their new daughter a male name – and vice versa. It's another way of petitioning the gods, in this case for the gender of their next child.



Until very recently large families were the norm in Mongolia, especially in rural areas where children are the only security parents have in their old age. Mothers used to be awarded medals for having five children or more, so naming all your kids could turn into quite a challenge.

Mongolian names range from the poetic – *Altan Duul* (Golden Flame) is my favourite – to the ferocious. *Malmas* is a placid, happily married man in his forties, who works in Tsengel as an accountant. He's named after the legendary *Almas* – a towering, ferocious, coarse-haired beast, who apparently still lives in the remote Altai mountains and carries off the occasional nubile young man or woman to satisfy his rapacious appetites.

No-one has quite been able to explain that one to me.

Louisa Waugh lives and works in Mongolia and is writing a book about Mongolian life.

SARAH JOHN

ENVIRONMENT

Chopstick controversy

China eats its forest away

EACH DAY in Chengdu, China – capital of the world-renowned Sichuan cuisine – hundreds of thousands of people crowd into the city's 60,000 restaurants to eat barrowloads of meat, rice, eggs, vegetables and chillies. To do this they use disposable chopsticks which require 4,000 cubic metres of timber. 'For that amount you need to fell 100 trees with an average height of ten metres,' said Cai Shiyan, a deputy of the National People's Congress.

Throwaway chopsticks are now used in all but the poorest and the most expensive restaurants throughout China. The poor ones reuse bamboo chopsticks after cursory washing. The expensive ones prefer sanitized, lacquered-wood chopsticks. All the rest use disposable wooden chopsticks.

China is the biggest consumer, producer and exporter of chopsticks. It fells 25 million trees a year to make 45 billion pairs. Two-thirds are used in China and few are recycled.

But concern is growing over the environmental consequences. The Government is convinced that the devastating floods last summer, which killed more than 3,000 people, were caused by soil erosion due to excessive logging in river basins. Within weeks, the State Council banned logging and lumberjacks became planters in Sichuan Province.

Cai, who is campaigning for a ban on disposable chopsticks, says: 'It takes 30 to 40 years for a birch tree to mature, yet thousands are eaten away in the time it takes to finish a meal.'

China is severely short of trees – only 13.9 per cent of its 9.6 million square kilometres is covered by forest. Its amount of forest land per capita is ranked 121st in the world. Now 12 of the 40 state-owned logging companies have nothing left to fell. 'The remaining 80 million hectares of natural forests will disappear in a decade if this felling continues,' says Professor Shen Guofang, of Beijing Forestry University.

Cai suggests Chinese restaurants should go back to the old days and reuse chopsticks – but always sterilize them. 'Individuals could solve the problem themselves by carrying their chopsticks in their pockets,' said Cai.

At Beijing Forestry University, disposable chopsticks have been banned. Workers at the National Environmental Protection Agency now use their own and six well-known restaurants in Chengdu have stopped using the disposable kind. 'We need rigorous control over the felling of trees for disposable chopsticks,' insists Liu Yun, director of the China Chopsticks Museum. 'Export should be reduced, and production restricted.'

Yang Zheng/Gemini News Service



Oysters help clean ocean

Oyster shells are to clean up waste water in Oshima, Japan. 'Oyster shells harbour large numbers of anaerobic and aerobic microbes on their surfaces. Dirty water is food for these microbes,' explains Toyokuni Asahina, one of the designers of the wastewater plant. Around 250 tonnes of shells will be used annually to form layers in filtration tanks where the oyster-shell microbes can feast on kitchen, bath and laundry water from 265 households.

New Scientist Vol 161 No 2169

Curiosity kills

Fifty journalists were killed worldwide in 1998, nearly twice the number the year before. Latin America is the most dangerous part of the world – 22 journalists were killed there last year according to the International Federation of Journalists. The worst countries were Colombia, where ten were killed, and Mexico, where six journalists were murdered. In Peru, the National Association of Journalists registered 121 attacks on journalists or media outlets.

Latin America Press Vol 31 No 2

Empty houses, full shelters

More Spaniards have a second home than any other country in Western Europe; 15 per cent of housing in Spain is empty – but there are 273,000 homeless people on the streets. While rich districts and tourist resorts continue to be developed, the Government has cut council housing by eight per cent in the past decade. Eight out of ten homeless people are men, with unemployment being the main reason they hit the streets.

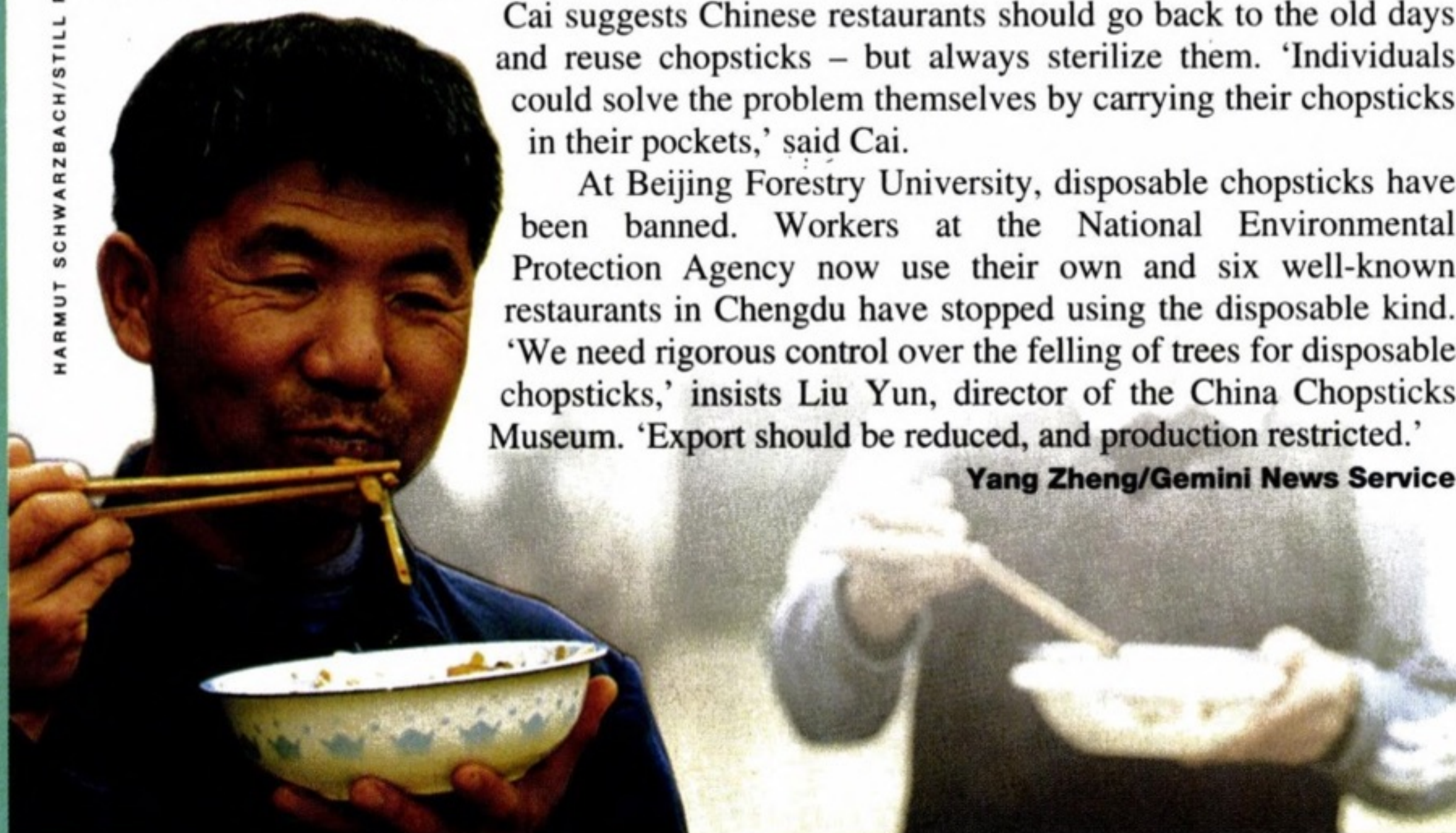
Share International Vol 17 No 9

Creative moneymaking

Juarez Mello, mayor of the small town of Braga in Brazil, has found a novel approach to the country's economic troubles – inventing money. Mello says he created his new currency, the Bonus, to help reactivate the economy in his town of 4,500 people. He dismisses complaints from the Finance Ministry, saying he is merely following President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's suggestion that 'only those who are creative will survive'. Brazil is facing one of its most difficult economic crises in years. In the first few weeks of 1999, the country's currency, the real, lost more than ten per cent of its value against the US dollar.

Latin America Press Vol 31 No 2

HARMUT SCHWARZBACH/STILL PICTURES



Language lessons

In the US, Irma Rivera, who was fired because she spoke Spanish to a co-worker on the job in violation of a jewelry store policy, was awarded \$500,000 by a jury in the first case to challenge an employer's English-only policy. The number of complaints to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission from people claiming such policies are discriminatory has doubled in the past two years. And a number of other court actions are under way – including the case of truck driver Rogelio Campos. He was given a ticket under a section of federal transportation law that prohibits drivers from operating

commercial vehicles if they do not have an adequate command of English. 'The funny thing here is that he was able to take a test for his commercial license in Spanish, but he is required to speak English,' says Fernando Mateo, a Dominican immigrant who employs Campos. He has prompted Campos to take English classes, telling him people should speak the language of the land where they live. 'You are a nobody in this country if you can't speak English,' Mateo says, 'but I don't feel that, constitutionally, anyone should be given a ticket because they can't speak the language.'

CIS NEWS

Stressed spouses

Millions of women are worried about what they see as a threat to Japanese family life – having their husbands at home more often. Experts even have an official term for tensions caused by spouses seeing more of each other – *Otto zaitaku shokugun* – as the number of working hours drop due to the recession. In 1985 people were at work 175 hours per month whereas in 1998 working hours were only 158 per month in Japan. And this figure has fallen another half-an-hour per day as companies cut overtime. This, plus rising joblessness and less money available for men to go out on the town, means that they are home for much longer than ever before. But, despite the stress caused by these changes, Masahiro Yamada from Tokyo Gakugei University says this may be a positive social shift: 'People will realize that to seek only economic influence is not necessarily good.'

World Press Review Vol 46 No 2

Hazy standards

The tobacco industry has been accused of using covert methods to maintain addictiveness to cigarettes – such as the use of high-nicotine tobacco, additives like ammonia to increase the 'hit' and flavours such as cocoa to make cigarettes easier to inhale and increase its appeal amongst children. The British and American Medical Associations have urged their governments to act immediately to make cigarettes less addictive. They say that 'millions of lives could be saved' if tobacco makers were forced to reduce nicotine to zero or negligible levels within the next five to ten years.

The Independent No 3744



AID

Miserly move

European Commission gives less to the poor

THE European Commission (EC) spent three-quarters of its development aid on low-income countries during the 1980s. Now those same countries receive barely half. The shift has come despite a European Union (EU) commitment to bring half of the world's poor out of extreme poverty by 2015.

It is a shift that must be reversed, according to a growing number of voices. Amongst them is the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Its Development Assistance Committee calls into question 'how far the EC policy on poverty is reflected in the allocation of aid resources'. The report says: 'The EC allocates a lower proportion of its resources to lower-income countries than most other donors and there has been a trend for this share to fall over recent years.'

Europe's international development spending matters because of its size. The EC is the world's fifth-largest development assistance donor, with a current annual budget of \$5.3 billion.

Back in 1995, the European Union chose to allocate a great deal of aid to the southern Mediterranean and North Africa – known as the Meda countries in EU jargon. The decision was based on geopolitics, not the principle of greatest need. As a result, current EC aid spending shows such vast discrepancies as Morocco receiving eight times the

Shifting the balance – Europe slashes aid.

per-capita aid of Bangladesh and Ethiopia.

'The implications of those decisions weren't really thought through then, but now that it's obvious, I hope people will try to readjust the balance,' says Helen O'Connell of One World Action. Her organization is among those joining the clamour against the EC's spending priorities. It was part of a delegation representing some of the biggest UK-based aid agencies – including Oxfam, Save the Children Fund, Christian Aid and the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development – that submitted a report blaming the EC for 'ill-judged decisions' when it set its financial guidelines for 1993-99.

They call for the EC to fix its minimum spending on poor countries at 62 per cent of its development budget, the average among EU member states. 'There's a really strong group of like-minded states that are supporting more spending on the poor,' says O'Connell. 'I think something will happen because most people can recognize that it's inequitable at the moment. The real challenge is the southern European countries, which are concerned about the Meda countries, and Germany and Austria, who are concerned about their near neighbours in the east.'

Mike Crawley/Gemini News Service



LISA TAYLOR / PANOS PICTURES

HARTMUT SCHWARZBACH / STILL PICTURES

POLYP
big Bad World

WE CAN'T PREVENT STOCK MARKET CRASHES BECAUSE IT WOULD UNDERMINE FREE TRADE
WE CAN'T CURB GLOBAL WARMING BECAUSE THE OIL INDUSTRY IS TOO IMPORTANT
WE CAN'T END STARVATION BECAUSE WE NEED TO KEEP THE GLOBAL ECONOMY GROWING
WE CAN'T HAVE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY BECAUSE WIND FARMS ARE TOO NOISY
WE CAN'T BAN PESTICIDES BECAUSE ORGANIC FARMING WOULD PUT UP PRICES
WE CAN'T HAVE AN UNBIASED MEDIA BECAUSE IT'S WRONG TO CONTROL OWNERSHIP
WE CAN'T SPEND MORE ON EDUCATION BECAUSE WE NEED THE MONEY FOR DEFENCE
WE CAN'T RECYCLE OUR WASTE BECAUSE IT'S CHEAPER TO DUMP IT IN LANDFILLS
WE CAN'T HAVE FAIR TRADE BECAUSE IT WOULD REDUCE THE SHAREHOLDERS' PROFITS
WE CAN'T CANCEL THIRD WORLD DEBT BECAUSE IT WOULD AFFECT THE BANKING SYSTEM
WE CAN'T INCREASE THE AID BUDGET BECAUSE WE'VE GOT TO LOWER TAXES
WE CAN'T OPPOSE DICTATORSHIPS BECAUSE IT WOULD ENDANGER OUR OIL SUPPLIES
WE CAN'T ABOLISH THE ARMS TRADE BECAUSE WE NEED TO PRESERVE JOBS
WE CAN'T BE SURE WHO'S BECAUSE IT WOULD INTERFERE WITH MARKET FORCES
WE CAN'T BE SURE WHO'S BECAUSE IT WOULD INTERFERE WITH MARKET FORCES

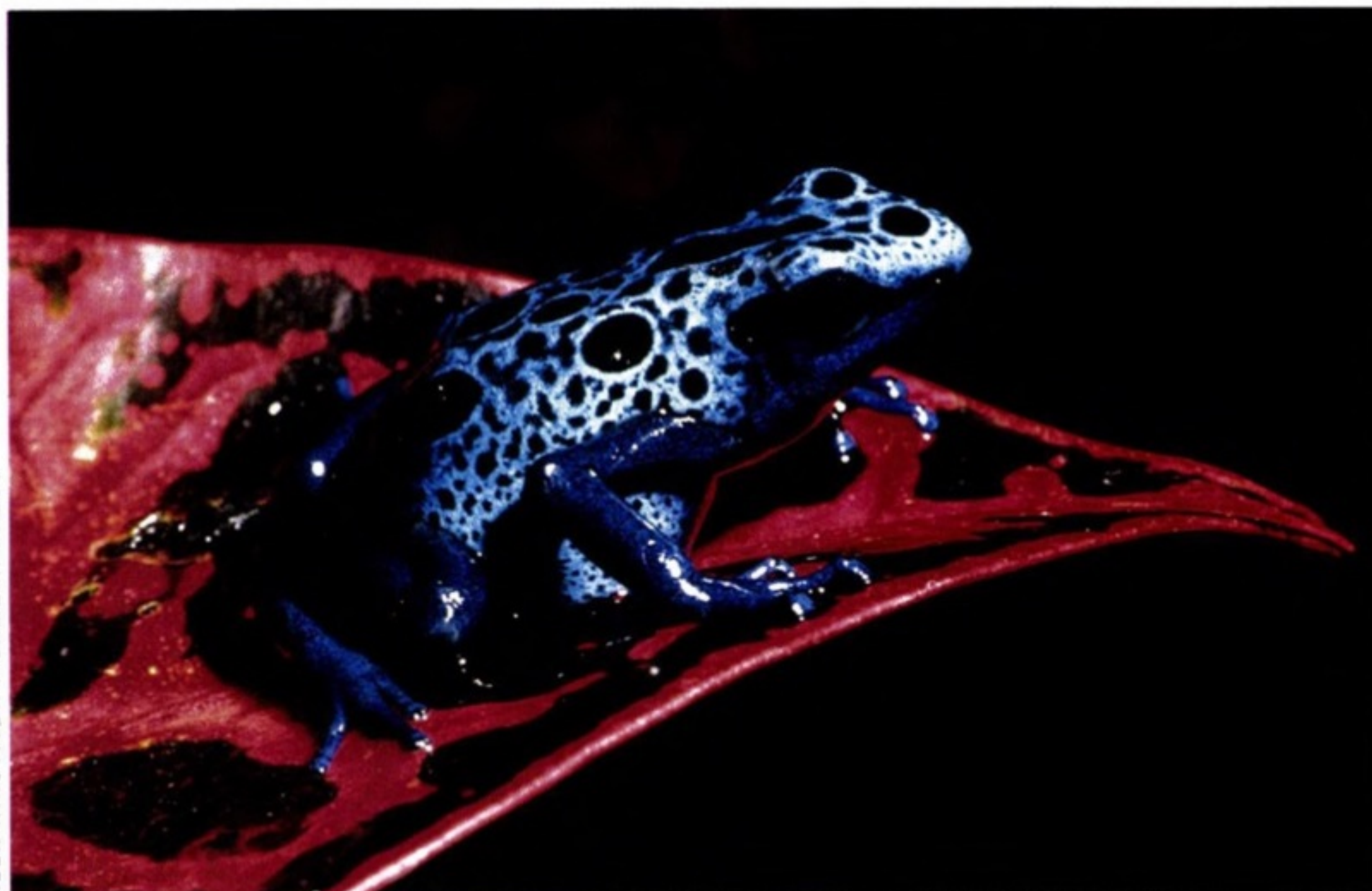
INSPIRATIONAL
LEADERSHIP



ECUADOR

Invasion of the frog-snatchers

Activists are hopping mad over the development of a new drug



ALEX KIRSTITCH / CAMERA PRESS

Wanted – Ecuador's poison-dart frogs are in demand.

IN November last year Abbott Laboratories, a US-based pharmaceutical company, announced the development of a new pain-killer that may be up to 200 times as strong as morphine. It produces no side effects and could replace analgesics currently used for surgery and treatment of severe pain – giving it the top position they occupy in a prescription-drug market currently worth \$40 billion annually.

But in Ecuador there was an outcry at this news, because the active ingredient of the new analgesic (known as ABT-594) is found in a poison secreted by a frog. The 'poison-dart frog' is found only in the foothills of the central Ecuadorian Andes and its poison is used

by indigenous people for hunting.

Two Ecuadorian environmental organizations, Ecological Action and the Environmental Law Center, say that 750 poison-dart frogs were taken to the US without permission in 1976. Now the earnings projected for ABT-594 have led Ecuador to seek to benefit from Abbott's discovery. But Ecuador has not found legal grounds for suing because the US has not ratified international conventions dealing with biological resources and does not require its companies to abide by them. Ecuador has sent an official request to Abbott that the company 'recognize and share, in a fair and equitable manner, the benefits derived from the knowledge of indigenous communities,' but so far it has received no reply.

Meanwhile, researchers from New York Botanical Garden took insects back to the US last year, despite an agreement with Ecuador's National Herbarium and the Technical Unit of Plan Awa which authorized plant samples but not insects. They also took two shamans to help classify

the samples, says Fernando Moreno, an anthropologist working with the World Wide Fund for Nature. 'By taking the shamans, they left the community unprotected, because the shaman is the symbol of security in indigenous peoples' world view,' he says. Gina Chávez, Vice President of Ecological Action, said that while biological prospecting may benefit indigenous groups if their right to their ancestral knowledge is respected, she remains sceptical. 'The effects will most likely be negative,' she says, 'because as the environment deteriorates, their survival will be threatened and they will slowly be incorporated into the *mestizo* (mixed-race) world.'

Luis Angel Saavedra/Latin America Press Vol 31 No 2



AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police combat homophobia

The Australian city of Sydney is home to the second-largest population of homosexuals in the world, (surpassed only by San Francisco) and the renowned Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. But it is also subject to violent homophobia. Between 1990 and 1997, 33 homosexuals were murdered in what are described as 'hate crimes'. But police are attempting to improve relations with the gay community and

curb violence – in 1990 police in Sydney appointed Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers who give lectures on homophobia in schools, provide protection for gay events and lead anti-bias sessions in police training. Assaults against homosexuals have dropped 46 per cent in the past five years and almost 70 per cent of homosexual murder cases have been solved.

World Press Review Vol 46 No 1

More depressing news

There are 330 million people around the world suffering from depression. According to Dr Christopher Murray from the World Health Organization (WHO), major depression will be the world's second-most debilitating disease by 2020 – losing a number of years of productive life that is surpassed only by cardiovascular disease. Medical scientists estimate that rates of major depression are between four and ten per cent of the world population and lifetime prevalence of the condition – the chance of developing it at some point – runs between ten and twenty per cent. And WHO says the global total of suicides

attributable to depression per year is 800,000. Cashing in on this trend are companies supplying a \$7-billion worldwide market for anti-depressants – expected to expand 50 per cent over the next five years. But joining the anti-Prozac backlash are countries like Germany, where the herbal remedy St John's Wort is seven times more popular than Prozac for treating depression. Others say poverty may have something to do with depression's cause and cure – Russia's rates of depression soared in recent years as the economy drooped and in the West the poor suffer disproportionately from the disease.

The Economist Vol 349 No 8099

Quote

'We will all be middle class soon.'

British Prime Minister Tony Blair.



Running for her life, **Anouk Ride** catches a glimpse of the hysteria, horror and hope of Northern Ireland's peace process.

WE all flee at that moment – the grandmothers, the fathers, the priest, the dogs, even the most plucky of the kids. With a camera bouncing around my neck and against a pounding heart, I race with that panicked crowd across the marshy lawn. The source of our fear – the masses of orange-sashed marchers – had suddenly surged, while yelling to the tunes of a military band, towards us.

Between the advancing Protestant/Loyalist marchers of the Orange Order and the minority Catholic/Nationalist community standing outside their local St Joseph's church is a line of Royal Ulster Constabulary police who face the marchers. The Catholic/Nationalists are monitored by a human wall of soldiers in black riot gear with shields, helmets, batons and guns. Logically, it is clear that with armed British men occupying every bit of space between the thousands of marchers and a few hundred residents, it is impossible

In pursuit of **peace & reconciliation**

for the two groups to come to blows. But the fears of what had happened in the past and what could happen in the future fuse together in an explosion of hysteria.

The marchers could not go any further than the line of riot-gear men at the head of the Garvaghy Road in Portadown, Northern Ireland. Of course earlier that day, 19 December 1998, it all seemed like a game – the residents singing ‘We wish you a Merry Christmas’ over the beats of the Orange Order marching band; bursting into laughter at a puppy which scampered around the feet of

Portadown has been forcibly expelled from the town centre by gangs. They have had their homes razed to the ground and Catholic/Nationalist-owned shops and the local gas station have been attacked. Most of these incidents occur on the same days as the marches. At one recent rally the Grand Master of the Orange Order, Robert Saulters, called for the leader of the Garvaghy Road residents’ committee to be ‘taken out’. From 5 July to 3 December 1998 there were over 130 Orange Order demonstrations in Portadown, the vast majority of them illegal.

Have you spotted the bias in this article yet? Excuse this not-so-uncommon break from journalistic tradition. For I knew, as I stood in the Republican Milltown cemetery in Belfast, that it was impossible for me to be objective about Northern Ireland. Reading the headstones, I realized that people

lived the ‘troubles’ from their cradle to their grave. The older gravestones frequently say things like ‘Martyred for his faith’, whereas newer ones are inscribed with political meaning – such as the many who were ‘Murdered in their home’. And as I stopped at another gravestone for a mother ‘and also her children who rest in Brisbane, Australia’, it seemed like those who had passed were reminding me of my good fortune to be born and live in a country with

politics, not war.

Although I was saddened by the senseless loss of life that lay beneath my feet, I could not help but feel angry at the British Black Hawk helicopters circling like noisy vultures over my head. These reminded me that I abhor British human-rights abuses conducted during its troubled rule of Northern Ireland and in many now-free places around the world; that I am disgusted at its rapidly expanding arms sales to the Majority World. Each whirr of the helicopter propellers made me appreciate the chance to be able to vote for an Australian Republic, and strengthened my desire for the survivors of the Troubles at least to be able to assert their status as more than just a colonial offshoot and have the power to determine collectively their own future.

A mural not far from the cemetery shows Republicans alongside other ‘revolutionaries’ such as Che Guevara. The Aboriginal Australian flag is a prominent part of the collage of international resistance. But my sympathies with the Republican movement and other campaigns – from the Western Sahara to West Papua – do not include support for the kind of violence I saw in the Catholic/Nationalist-dominated city of Derry. I was as appalled by the intimidation, violence and prejudice against the minority Protestant/Loyalists as I was by the treatment of Catholic/Nationalists in Portadown. Here too the minority community are scared

It is ironic but true that each warring faction in every armed conflict around the world, sees itself as a victim of injustice fighting for its rights

bewildered soldiers and their German shepherds, yapping defiantly; or the stories about a guy dressed up as Santa Claus on Craigwell Avenue with a question to the Orange Order taped onto his chest: ‘Do they know it’s Xmas?’ But the reality is that these laughs are a temporary break in concentration as people chain-smoke, bite nails, fidget and drink bottomless cups of tea as they wait for the violence to come back into their homes again.

The Catholic/Nationalist minority in

Parade of pride – the march brings fear to Portadown’s Catholic/Nationalists.
(Previous page) Climbing the ladder of peace – 70 per cent of Northern Ireland’s people voted for the latest peace agreement.



to shop in the centre of town or go to the central pubs. They have also been intimidated out of their homes and feel discriminated against by local authorities.

I begin to understand how this feeling of victimhood is manipulated by groups such as the Orange Order. Catherine, a worker representing the Protestant/Loyalist community at Derry's Peace and Reconciliation Group, explains: 'Loyalists say Protestant Alienation is happening here, in Derry. If young Loyalists want to go to university, they go to Coleraine. I went to the tech college 18 years ago and was intimidated and I won't let my kids go there. There are no jobs for kids. They've been unemployed so long they have a joke, they say: "Unemployment is hereditary – my father had it, my grandfather had it and so I have it." Bars and pubs in town are one-sided. Protestants don't come over the bridge after five. So the Protestants see the Orange Order as them; it could be me or you standing there in Portadown with people telling you to get off the street. In the Loyalist housing estate the majority of these people have never been to Portadown or Drumcree yet they are out on the streets rioting about it. They say if the marches don't happen we'll be on the road to a united Ireland.'

It is ironic but true that each warring faction, each armed killer, in every armed conflict around the world, sees itself as a victim of injustice fighting for its rights. And despite what 'side' I may sympathize with in Northern Ireland or any other conflict, I cannot condone the use of murder, intimidation and terror.

While conflict is an inevitable and creative force, violence is horrific and destructive. And so I support peace – which Johan Galtung defines as 'nonviolent and creative conflict transformation' – *at all costs*. Republicans and Loyalists have become the victims of common enemies: violence, fear and death. And, as Tanya, Catherine's Catholic/Nationalist co-worker, points out: 'We've only got a million-and-a-half population in Northern Ireland. We can't afford to be apart from each other.'

I am surprised at just how divided many communities remain. Catherine and Tanya admit that the breakdown of the first ceasefire created a lot of distrust. People are still reluctant to go out of their own community and are sceptical about what these new peace agreements will mean on the ground. And people say the newly elected Northern Ireland Assembly members have lost touch with what people need. 'The Assembly is like an episode of *Men Behaving Badly*. It's like a sitcom,' agree Catherine and Tanya. Maureen Hetherington, from Derry City Council, says: 'They're not talking about what they



Standing together – Tanya (left) and Catherine from Derry's Peace and Reconciliation Group (top). The active optimist – Nobel Peace Prize winner Mairead Maguire (below).

should be in the Assembly – health, education, infrastructure, unemployment. I've got three children and the Assembly has no relevance to what I want for them – peace, employment and education.' So each day that the Assembly members engage in narrow political point-scoring and refuse to compromise on issues such as marching and reform of the police endangers the peace process even further.

For peace to be real, people need to see it on the streets and in their own lives. In Belfast Vincent McKenna, from a support group called Families Against Intimidation and Terror, is appalled that the same groups involved in human-rights abuses have seats in the Assembly. He tells a joke about a group of Swedish journalists who came to interview him in the week David Trimble (Ulster Unionist Party leader) and John Hume (head of the Social and Democratic Labour Party) were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize: 'They asked me if I was having a party because of the Peace Prize! I said: "No, I'm not having a party! I'll tell you what I'm having..."' He goes on to list statistics: in 1998 there were 32 shootings by Loyalists, 37 by Republicans; 83 beatings by Loyalists, 79 by Republicans; the number of families forced to leave their homes due to intimi-

dation increased; 646 children were subject to human-rights abuses by organizations party to the peace process. Combined with the Omagh bombing and actions of other terrorist organizations, this means that around 1,000 children were subject to human-rights abuses in 1998 alone.

These incidents must be stopped for peace to proceed. But where a perpetrator is also a victim, many believe that getting ex-fighters into politics is the only way to go. Tanya says: 'You have to be careful to avoid being sucked into the apathy trap. If you get enough people to say the peace process is happening, then it is happening – you get to a situation where it is much harder for these people to walk away from the Assembly.'

The basic starting-point of peace – just getting people from different backgrounds in the same room to talk to each other (let alone to attend the same school or church service) – is new to many parts of Northern Ireland. Before leaving Catherine and Tanya, I get out the camera. 'Can you stand a bit closer to each other?' I ask.

'I'm not going near her; she's a Protestant,' says Tanya narrowing her eyes. 'And she's a Catholic!' exclaims Catherine in mock horror.

Amidst the scepticism, the jokes and the fear is the unfailing optimism of Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Prize winner and founder of Peace People. She says clear vision is what's needed: 'The Unionists are looking to the United Kingdom, the Nationalists are looking to Ireland. They need to turn around and start looking at each other.' And she believes the two communities can have a common Northern Irish identity based on their history of 70 years

'The Unionists are looking to the United Kingdom, the Nationalists are looking to Ireland. They need to turn around and start looking at each other'

separate from Ireland and 30 years of the Troubles: 'I get a sense that together we can solve the problems.'

Her faith is founded in the people that have been working for peace since the beginning of war. Often they were the women. At the door of Mairead's office, waiting to be packed up and sent away, are black-and-white photos of demonstrations – framed memories of women's struggle for peace. 'It was amazing. Ordinary unpoliticized women came out on to the streets and became politicized,' says Mairead. 'And of course women keep the peace in the

schools, in the churches. It would be a tragedy if the enormous role women have played in the peace process was written out of history.'

Seventeen years after her sister's death, Mairead wrote about Anne Maguire's history. Anne's is one of the many graves I visited

year-old IRA man, was shot through the head by a British soldier. His car swerved onto the footpath killing three of Anne's children.' Anne herself was not expected to survive the accident but did survive. 'Her broken legs and pelvis meant months of learning to walk again. One of her first outings was the Falls Road Rally where she read the Declaration of the Peace People. She also went to visit Mrs Lennon, saying that "she lost her child too".

'Anne never saw her children buried. In her own mind she refused to accept their deaths. She would often talk about seeing them playing in the garden. Their deaths and the brain bruising she suffered resulted in psychotic depression. Anne became a troubled soul.

'We were told that as she was a "determined suicide"; we could only pray and watch out for her. Finally, a painful, slow, lonely death on a bitter winter's day: Anne's

spirit flew away to join her little angels in heaven.

'I have told the story of Anne not to make anyone sad, but to give everyone hope. The story of Anne will be told long after all of us have gone to be with her. But let those who tell it, tell of her compassion, her courage, her joy, and above all her love for her family. We don't believe that Anne has gone from us, we see her and feel her presence with us all the time. I am certain that her wish for us all is: End the violence forever – *siocháin* – peace.'

Now Mairead sees her sister's wish beginning to come true. She applauds Hume and Trimble for their role in leading their own parties towards peace. And she says the outside help of Prime Ministers Blair and Ahern and particularly US Senator Mitchell were very important to obtain peace.

Mairead says while the two major problems of Northern Ireland – poverty and

Violence is not inevitable. Indeed, the unwritten history of the world may be the history of things we have not fought over

in Milltown cemetery. She is buried there with her three children, who were killed in a clash between the IRA and the British Army on Finaghy Road in North Belfast – four years before Anne took her own life in 1980. On the stone is inscribed: 'They died so others might live in peace.'

Mairead writes: 'Danny Lennon, a 19-

Eye to eye with SLORC

Malaysian journalist Ong Ju Lynn sees the human face of Burma's deadly regime and is shocked to find it like her own.

Early last year, 18 foreign nationals (from the US, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Australia) were detained in Rangoon after they were caught leafleting documents calling for the end of the current military regime. We came from all walks of life. A 19-year-old American college kid. A 51-year-old seasoned human-rights activist. A journalist who knows more about writing than direct activism.

We lived together 24-hours-a-day in an office six by eight metres. The guards brought us food and cigarettes. They accompanied us to the toilet, our only excursions.

Once in a while they came in to interrogate us. At night they draped themselves on chairs and tables, while we slept on mattresses under mosquito nets. On the third day we got braver: will you get us biryani rice from this shop at Sule Pagoda Road? We'll pay. To our delight, they did. The hard looks and indifference melted. Our smiles became genuine.

We had a constant attendant – a spy, you could say – who watched our every move, was present at every interrogation, who would not tell us what was going on, or would only tell us lies.

'How long will be kept here?' we asked.

'Very long.'

'How long? Forever?'

'Yes.'

Once I said: 'Don't ask him anything. He only tells lies.' I noticed a sting of hurt in his eyes. He didn't hide very well. Neither did the others. Neither did I.

After being held for six days we were deported. I came home with a knot in my chest that wouldn't go

Small pieces in a monstrous structure that is responsible for more than 10,000 of its people fighting for democracy in exile; for arbitrary arrests, tortures and deaths of elected representatives and activists; for the butchery and rapes of ethnic minorities and for the 120,000 refugees languishing on the borders of Thailand.

But I come home and I still think of them. Richard, our interrogator with a big pot belly: was he responsible? Richard, who shouted at me for not co-operating; whom we taught how to play cards; who patiently listened and translated into Burmese for his other colleagues; who passed his cards to his friend while he ran to answer a phone call; who promised to teach us a Burmese card game before we left.

Or how about the woman attendant who insisted on standing and watching me bathe? When I looked into her eyes, she was as naked as I was.

What about the guard we affectionately called the flower boy, who would go outdoors to pick flowers for our hair?

'Which do you want?'

'The yellow ones.' We made our choice peering out from the windows of our prison.

Or was Khin Maung, the judge responsible? His dedication to his job was admirable. Eight hours of sitting in his big, hard chair, listening patiently to statements from police officers and witnesses. He sentenced us to five years in Insein Prison, only for it to be overturned moments later by the Foreign Affairs Ministry. We were pardoned and deported.

The Americans see us as gallant heroes, taking on a military regime. I feel I do not fit there. Neither do I deserve the Malaysian Government's condemnation of our actions and labelling us as trouble-makers and lawbreakers. We went there to do a good thing for a forgotten people, and we took risks to do our best.

I will continue to fight for the rights of the oppressed under the military rule of Burma. I will write articles, compile updates, research and lobby. But during these six days I discovered humanity behind the villain's mask. In Burma, of course, the actors carry guns. Total evil is a clear target, a defined red bull's-eye in the centre of a white circle. In a Burmese prison, I found that the paint was mixed to a solid pink, bad inseparable from good. Humans, like me.

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MISHA ERWITT / MAGNUM

away. We came home heroes, but I did not feel jubilant and triumphant. I was ashamed, not for what I did, but because I really didn't want to see my captors as people. I wanted to come home and condemn the junta with authoritative vigour.

I can mock their ignorance – my captors who are part of the junta, who work nine-to-five jobs and go home to their families and TV sets.



Signs of the times – murals painted by the Nationalists of Derry (far left); Loyalists of Shankill Road (middle); and Republicans of Falls Road in Belfast.

ANOUK RIDE

violence – have yet to be tackled, she is thankful for the progress that has been made so far. With a deep exhalation she pauses and looks up at another photograph resting against her office wall. ‘You know Aung Sun Su Kyi?’ she says. ‘She’s inspirational. When I get tired, I look up at her. I hope that Burma can have the all-inclusive dialogue we have here.’ Dialogue with the military regime? Yes. She believes that people ‘have a goodness’, as Ong Ju Lynn describes (see *Eye to eye with SLORC*).

Violence is not inevitable. Indeed, the unwritten history of the world may be the history of things we have *not* fought over. Even Northern Ireland, which has become synonymous in many people’s minds with violence – the Irish gave the English language the word ‘boycott’ and it was peaceful Irish protests over land that inspired Gandhi, watching from London, to protest non-violently for the rights of Indian people and the poor.

A group of notable scientists and psychologists has endorsed the Seville Statement on Non-Violence. This states that there is no scientific evidence whatsoever that humans have a ‘violent brain’ or are genetically programmed to kill each other. No other species does. People in the 135 violent conflicts in the world today learn to respond violently to certain stimuli and suppress their ‘goodness’. They can learn non-violence instead. And we can all work to address the factors that stifle this goodness, to make space for peace to proceed and ultimately to allow reconciliation to occur. Internationally, nationally, locally and individually peace is possible using the right ingredients (see *The Road to Peace & Reconciliation*).

Peace is not a moment in time or a period of passive activity following a ceasefire, but a revolutionary process that transforms conflict to non-violent relations. The world

has tried violence to achieve its objectives for decades. Now, despite our technological and economic progress, we have a world plagued by small wars – where 95 per cent of casualties are civilians and 90 per cent of these casualties are caused by guns and small arms. We have a world where millions kill their neighbours, their fellow nationals, those within the firing range of a few metres. There are no winners in this kind of war.

Before boarding the plane to leave Northern Ireland, I buy the papers to see if there is much news of the Orange Order protest I had witnessed the day before. The front pages are filled with stories on Clinton and Blair’s pre-Christmas bombing of Iraq. These leaders of rich nations

are the only victors of war – those who do not have to look in the face of the people they kill, those who cannot recognize their victims. Unless we challenge this kind of autocratic power, unless we contest the violence that lies within our own cultures, unless we end militarization and uphold human rights, we will always be chased by fear – just as I was on that day in Portadown. Peace requires individual and collective commitment. We must start running in the opposite direction – towards reconciliation with one another and the past. It is not exactly a 100-metre sprint, more like a marathon. But the prize – an end to injustice, hurt and fright – must be magnificent. So come on: On your marks, Get set, Go!

Reaching towards Peace & Reconciliation

Peace is a revolutionary process that transforms conflict from violent to non-violent forms. The finishing-line of a peace process is reconciliation – the point at which we are reconciled with one another and the past.

There is no single formula that can be replicated in any part of the world. But to reach reconciliation, peace processes must take the following routes:

- ◆ Truth – including freedom of speech and also forums where different ‘truths’ can be aired alongside each other.
- ◆ Equality – for all people, including addressing the legacy of past inequality.
- ◆ Respect for human rights – encompassing a psychological and physical demilitarization to promote a culture where killing and torture are unacceptable.
- ◆ Creative communication – trying new and culturally appropriate ways of getting people taking and listening.
- ◆ Justice – on an international and local level, justice must be done for people to be able to reconcile with the past.
- ◆ Ownership of peace – the people must feel they have created the peace in order to nourish it.

Act across borders –

Support non-violent organizations worldwide. Use international organizations to put pressure on belligerent member states and lobby multinational corporations that do business with them.

Be a nuisance – Expose yourself to the elements, fast or hunger strike. Hold a sit-in, stand-in, ride-in, wade-in, or pray-in. Conduct a non-violent raid, invasion, interjection, obstruction or occupation. Overload facilities and administrative systems. Disclose identities of secret agents.

Defy authority – Withhold or withdraw allegiance. Refuse public support. Boycott government bodies, elections, government employment, government-supported institutions and withdraw from governmental educational

institutions. Refuse assistance to enforcement agents. Remove signs and official documents. Refuse to accept appointed officials. Refuse to dissolve existing institutions.

Recruit government personnel – Government employees can also be superdoves by selectively refusing assistance, blocking lines of command and information, stalling and obstructing, being deliberately inefficient or by mutiny.

Disobey and disappear – Be reluctant and slow in compliance. Disobey only when not under direct supervision. Or all the time. Disguise your disobedience as ignorance. Refuse to disperse. Sit down. Do not co-operate with conscription and deportation. Hide, escape and create false identities. Practise civil disobedience to 'illegitimate' laws.

Live in your own world – Set up alternative social institutions. Establish new social patterns. Install alternative communication systems. Create dual sovereignty and parallel government.

*Is it a bird? Is it
a plane? No it's*

SUPERDOVE

Faster than a
speeding bullet

More
powerful

than an
atomic bomb,
SUPERDOVE's
amazing might
astounds the world!!

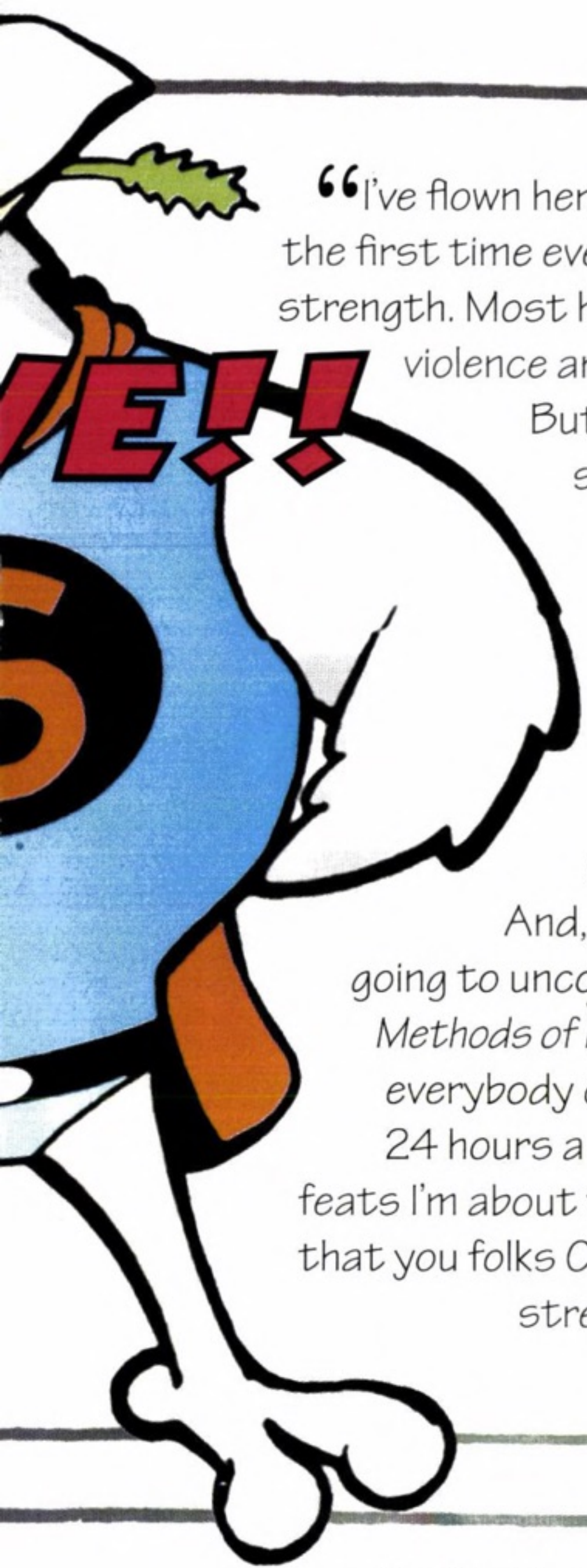
Harass a bureaucrat – Haunt or taunt officials. Fraternize with them and break down personal barriers. Hold vigils outside offices and homes.

Become a pro-active introvert – Ostracize, excommunicate, interdict or socially boycott. Suspend social and sports activities, practise social disobedience and withdraw from social institutions. Don't go to work. Collectively disappear or emigrate in protest.

Renounce and flounce – Walk out. Be silent. Renounce honours. Turn your back in protest.

Use your pocket power – Start a consumers' boycott, renters' and tenants' boycott and workers' and producers' boycott. Get the middle-people involved; have a suppliers' and handlers' boycott plus a traders' boycott. Get merchants to strike. Withdraw bank deposits. Don't pay debts, fees, dues or assessments. Sever funds, credit or revenue. Get governments to hold a domestic embargo and





“I’ve flown here today to reveal – for the first time ever – the secret of my strength. Most humans think that violence and war deliver results. But as a non-violent superhero, I absolutely disagree. Living in peace does not have to mean surrendering your rights or your point of view – it can mean taking action for change non-violently. And, to prove my point, I’m going to uncover my revolutionary *Methods of Non-violent Action*. Not everybody can pursue all of these 24 hours a day, as I do. But the feats I’m about to describe are ones that you folks CAN try at home, in the streets and at work.”

blacklist traders.

Conduct an international sellers’ and buyers’ embargo.

Make your own rules – Refuse to let or sell property. Refuse a government’s money. Lock-out. Refuse industrial assistance. Non-violently seize land. Defy blockades. Practise politically motivated counterfeiting. Seize assets. Dump. Selectively patronize. Run alternative markets. Use alternative transportation systems. Create alternative economic institutions.



Start a strike – Notify in advance or just hold a lightning strike. Have a slowdown strike, a working-to-rule-to-the-point-of-absurdity strike, an all-call-in-sick strike or an all-call-in-and-resign strike. Refuse to do certain duties on the job. Conduct multi-industry strikes. *Hartal* (close shops and businesses in protest).

(Source: Gene Sharp, *The Methods of Nonviolent Action*, 1973)



Get the message

– Use slogans, caricatures, and symbols. Create banners, posters and art. Distribute leaflets, pamphlets, newspapers, journals and books. Speak out on radio broadcasts and television. Write messages in the sky and on land. Display flags and symbolic colours, lights and portraits.

Be a trendsetter – Wear symbols and slogans. Disrobe or streak in protest! Deliver symbolic objects to people and organizations. Pray and worship in public. Destroy your own property to symbolize opposition. Create new signs and names for things you disapprove of. Use symbolic sounds. Conduct symbolic reclamations of people or the environment. Use rude gestures to oppose authority.

Come together – Represent a group and lobby or picket. Hold a deputation, mock award or mock election.

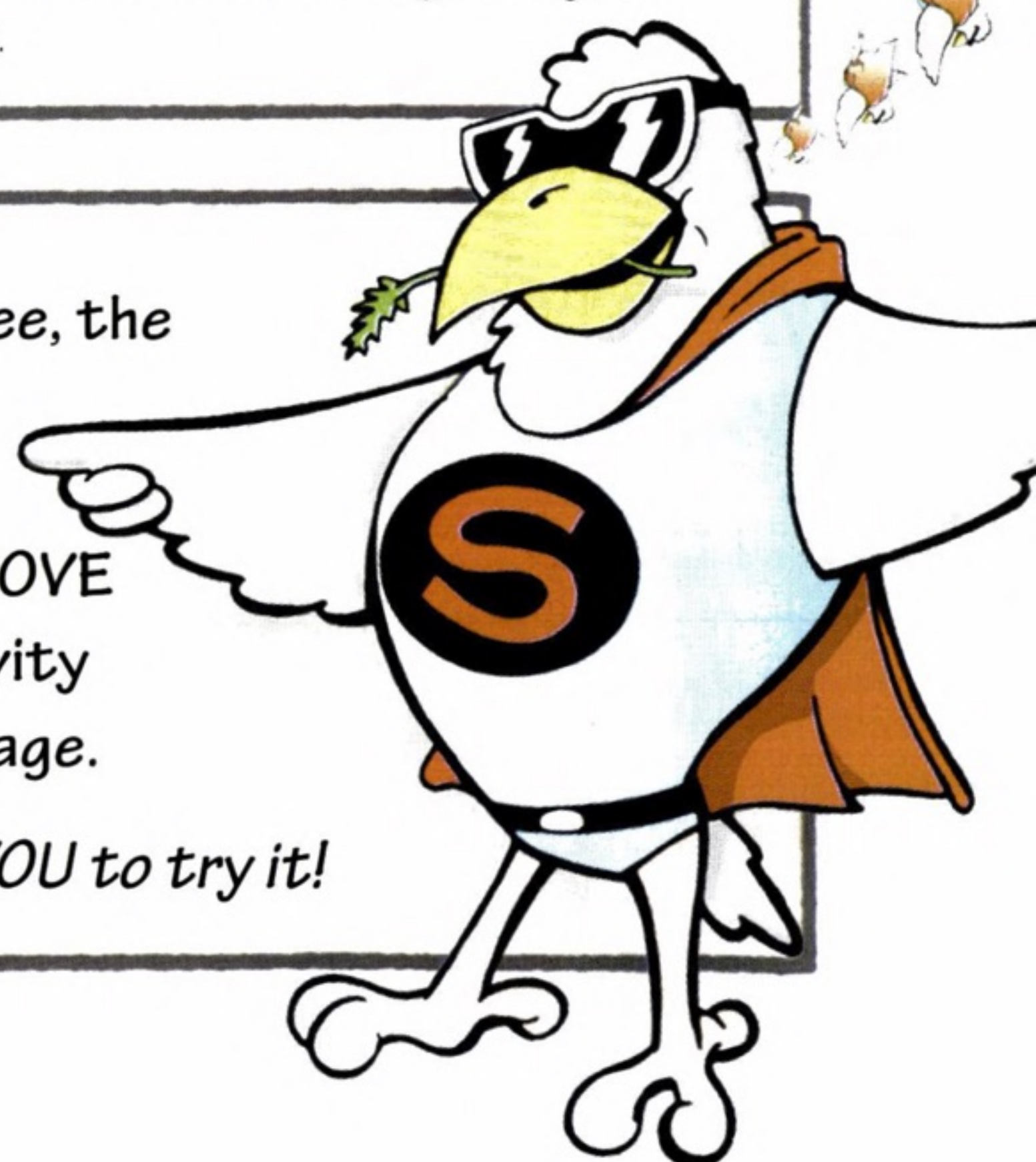
Be dramatic – Hold public speeches, letters, petitions and declarations by individuals and groups. Perform humorous skits and pranks. Act in plays. Play music. Shout. Sing.

Step out – March or parade. Join religious processions or pilgrimages. Organize a motorcade.

Honour the dead – Mourn the death of something you cherish, like your local forest or civil democracy. Hold mock funerals. Pay homage at burial places.

So you see, the essence of being **SUPERDOVE** is creativity and courage.

I DARE YOU to try it!



CREATIVE
COMMUNICATION**Nancy Scheper-Hughes**

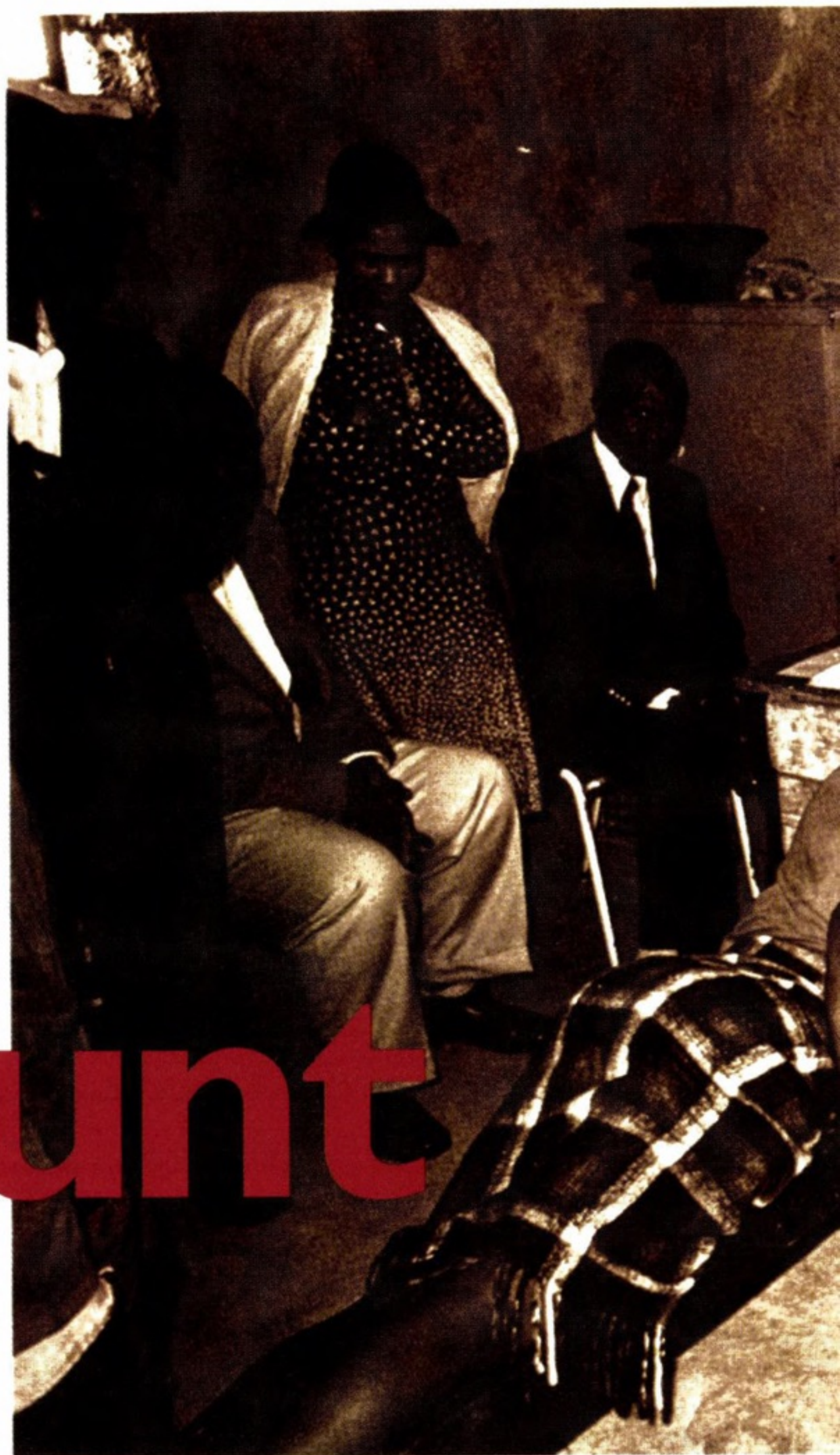
tracks down sorcerers,

floggers, healers and devil's

advocates in her pursuit of reconciliation in the
new South Africa.

Joining the witch-hunt

Whipping up a frenzy – the rough justice
of the people's court in Soweto.



As a very small girl, I was impressed by the story a nun told to our catechism class. It was about an old woman who went to her priest asking forgiveness for a sin of gossip that had harmed the reputation of a neighbor. The priest accepted the woman's expression of remorse, gave her 'conditional' absolution, told her to mend her ways, and gave her the following penance. He ordered the old woman to climb the belfry of the parish church, where she was to cut a small hole in a feather pillow and then shake the feathers loose onto the streets below. Then she was told to go about the village collecting the feathers until she had enough to sew back into the pillow. 'But Father,' the woman protested, 'that would be impossible!' To which the good priest sadly replied: 'Yes, and so, too, is it impossible to undo the damage caused by malicious acts.'

Wise words – but counterintuitive to the received wisdom of the day. For the romance with remorse and with reparation, memory and healing – of both the individual

and groups – has emerged as a master narrative of the late twentieth century, as individuals and entire nations struggle to overcome the legacies of suffering ranging from rape and domestic violence to state-sponsored dirty wars and 'ethnic cleansing'. Lawrence Weschler has hit upon an appropriate metaphor for looking at the present contexts of national recovery: 'getting over'.

'Getting over it'

Just what needs to be 'gotten over' if South Africa and South Africans are to get safely to the other side? Surely, as many have argued, a first step towards reconciliation is learning exactly what happened to whom, by whom, and why.

'I sometimes wonder,' said Father Lapsley, who received a letter bomb from the apartheid regime, 'who that man or woman was who typed my name on the envelope that was supposed to kill me. I wonder – what did they tell their spouses or children that night at supper time about what they did in the office that day? Either

they are so dehumanized that they don't care or else they have learned to live comfortably with their guilt. I don't want vengeance but I think that the names and faces of these people should be known.'

The official vehicle to facilitate 'getting over' is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the TRC. More than 2,000 victims of apartheid-era brutality have told their stories to the independent Commission and a smaller number of perpetrators of the violence have come forward to confess the details of their attacks on civilians, in exchange for political amnesty.

Those seeking truth in South Africa today do not want the partial, indeterminate, shifting 'truths' of the post-modern but rather the single, sweet, 'objective' truth of the moralist and, with it, a restored sense of wholeness and a taste of justice. But, as Justice Albie Sachs has noted, South Africans are willing to settle for a 'good enough' truth – a narrative that will at least place black and white South Africans, Afrikaners and English speakers, Xhosas

PEACE & RECONCILIATION

SOUTH AFRICA



and Zulus, African National Congress and PanAfrican Congress members, on the same map rather than living in different nations across the road from each other.

There are, of course, many critics of the TRC 'process'. Some worry about the focus on the 'exceptional', the 'extreme', and on the 'gross' acts of human-rights violation, which runs the risk of obscuring or, worse, of normalizing the daily acts of apartheid's structural violence – the legal, medical, economic, bureaucratic and commercial violations of human rights that alienated millions of South Africans from their property, their homes, their families, their labor, their citizenship and even from their own bodies.

Still others – most of the 'ordinary' South African whites I have spoken to – worry about witch-hunting, scapegoating, and persecution. Indeed, it seems that a great many white people in South Africa still fail to get the point behind the TRC. So, time and again, I was told that if General Malan ordered these tortures or that massacre, it was because he had to do

it for the national security. Those who were detained, tortured and killed were not innocent, after all, they were terrorists. And, I was reminded, Communists were poised to take over all of Southern Africa.

As for the 'higher ups', their defences are well fortified. Wynand Breytenbach, for example, a former Deputy Defence Minister under both Presidents Botha and De Klerk, is now comfortably retired on a government pension and living out his days as a recovering heart-transplant patient in a luxurious, well-tended and gate-secured community in Sun Valley. He remains unrepentant as he comments on the revelations of torture and murder by the apartheid regime: 'You know, I sat in at all the top executive meetings of the Defence Force, which is where all the decisions were taken... and I swear to you that never, ever were these sorts of things discussed. OK, we said that we must try and achieve something in this area [ie torture] to get stability. But these characters went out and slaughtered people like cattle.'

'Does that mean that discipline had broken down in the security forces?' I asked.

'I wouldn't say that discipline had broken down so much as... If you read that book *The Sword and the Swastika*, you can see what the Germans did in the past war to the Jews. You just can't believe it. And there, too, you find the same thing as happened here. It all boils down to a few individuals, a few rotten apples, small people sitting in big jobs who suddenly think that they can play God... But nowhere and at no time were these things ever discussed or hinted at during the executive meetings.'

In his extraordinary narrative, Breytenbach both manages to deny and to assert his knowledge of, and responsibility for, the state-level atrocities, to attribute blame both above and below him, and to take comfort in the knowledge that the kinds of atrocities committed by the apartheid state are not unique to South Africa but have taken place before (as in Nazi Germany). And now, he says, the real 'bad guys' are the 'disadvantaged' black criminals who have no respect for law and order, and so corrupt the morals of white people who violently respond to the country's rising crime.

Like most whites I have encountered since 1992, Breytenbach fails to recognize the enormous grace by which he and all white South Africans have been spared. In the light of the aberrant behavior coming to light through the TRC amnesty hearings, one is inclined to feel that perhaps the 'witch-hunting' metaphor is not such a bad one. The apartheid state was filthy with 'witches' at all levels of power and authority and a little 'witch-hunting' could clear the air.

CHRIS STEELE-PERKINS / MAGNUM

Witchcraft and popular justice

Allow me, then, to play devil's advocate in suggesting that witch-hunting might not only be a fitting metaphor for the collective recovery and healing of South Africa, but that certain aspects of this kind of popular

It seems that a great number of white people in South Africa still fail to get the point behind the TRC

justice have been incorporated into the curiously hybrid formulas and rituals of the TRC.

Confession is, of course, a central dynamic in all witchcraft-believing societies from the Navajo and Pueblo peoples of the American south-west to highland Papua New Guinea, from vast stretches of indigenous Africa to the Bocage region of modern France. Conventional insight suggests that witch-hunts are aberrant and



PAUL WEINBERG / PANOS

Harvesting hope: more than 2,000 people have told their stories to the TRC (above). Rainbow over ruins – Soweto's squatter camp (below right).

dysfunctional institutions which choose the 'witch' as the surrogate ritual scapegoat who represents the group's worst collective nightmare. The processes of fact-finding, guilt determination, the ritualized expressions of remorse and the demand for immediate, though often symbolic, reparation strike liberal, bourgeois sensibilities as weak, irrational and unjust. But a great many anthropologists have challenged the Western stereotype by showing the positive uses of witchcraft in restoring health to troubled communities.

In South Africa, the power of traditional

Miscarriages of popular justice can result in outbreaks of indiscriminate witch-hunting hysteria and witchburnings, such as the much-publicized spate of recent witch-hunts in Venda, northern Transvaal. But these incidents are anomalies compared to the more common and judicious applications of 'counter-sorcery' as a traditional form of popular justice. During the anti-apartheid struggle years, some of these older practices were transformed into newer institutions of popular justice, including the people's courts, security committees and discipline committees put into place by 'the comrades' in urban townships and squatter camps. People's courts meted out a rough sort of popular, revolutionary justice using apologies and fines, public lashings and at times suspected or confessed police collaborators were punished or even killed as 'witches'.

But in my work in a new and desperately poor squatter camp outside Cape Town during 1993-94, and during a return study in 1996, I was impressed by the generally responsible manner of those involved in community policing and in administering the organs of popular justice. For example, in the Chris Hani squatter camp, several young ANC and PAC members intervened when an angry mob gathered around three local unemployed teenage boys who were caught stealing 400 rand from a local shebeen (bar). The crowd wanted the boys 'necklaced' (burned to death) but these few youth leaders, waving the then-draft ANC Bill of Rights, raised their voices in protest

and argued for public whippings rather than the death penalty. The floggings were laid on 'collectively' by several older men of the community.

Afterwards I visited the boys and they were not a pretty sight. Their eyes were dull with fever, they had trouble bending their legs, sitting and urinating. But following the incident many open-air meetings took place in the squatter camp at which the future of people's courts and popular justice were endlessly debated. Only one of the boys could not get over his anger at the floggers. He was advised to leave the squatter camp and was given help in locating a new home. The other two boys accepted their punishment and were reintegrated into the camp. Nothing more was said about their crime. The last time I saw one of them he boasted that his circumcision 'cut' hurt very badly, much worse, he maintained, than his whipping.

The strength of these institutions of popular justice is that they are immediate, public, collective, face-to-face and relatively transparent. They are based on traditional notions of *ubuntu* (people are people through the eyes of others), and the power of shame within a context of codes of personal honor and dignity.

Of course, popular justice and people's courts are vulnerable on many counts. They depend on volunteers and have a high turnover following any criticism of their activities or decisions. Many township and squatter-camp residents are afraid to serve on people's courts, fearing intimidation by relatives of those accused and/or punished; paving the way for 'strongmen' with vigilante or police connections to usurp these roles. But in the main, these grassroots institutions operate judiciously. And, elements of both traditional and popular justice have made their way into the uniquely South African version of the idea of the 'truth commission'.

Witch-hunting and the TRC

Like traditional witch-hunting and the people's courts, the TRC is not terribly concerned with fact-checking and relies more on the power of the dramaturgical moment – public enactments of suffering, confession, remorse and forgiveness. The TRC places a high premium on apologies offered in person by the perpetrators, who are asked to give 'eye contact' to those who were hurt and wronged. At the close of each amnesty hearing, the commissioners and trained 'briefers' expedite a 'closing' ritual by inviting the survivors to come forward and address their former tormentors, raising with them any final, unanswered questions.

And so Dawie Ackerman, who lost his wife when shooting broke out in a church in an incident known as the St James

The apartheid state was filthy with 'witches' at all levels of power and authority and a little 'witch-hunting' could clear the air

Zulu medicine resides in the *sangoma's* (healer's) skill in identifying the social tensions, 'hard feelings' and anti-social hostilities that can congeal into sickness, misfortune and death in the community. 'Witches' are asked to identify themselves, to come forward and to 'speak out' their 'bottled up' envy, hatred and guilt. And a great many 'witches' do – confessions are said to be a means of 'emptying themselves' of the burden of evil and restoring feelings of lightness and emptiness which signify balance, health and good relations.

Rarely, however, do such public confessions result in amnesty and even the most repentant 'witches' can be punished by fines, forced labor and public floggings.

Massacre, comes forward. He tells the young men who killed his wife how he had to step over dead bodies in order to get to her, still sitting bolt upright in the front-row pew, and how all the while he was hoping against hope that Marita might just be shell-shocked but still alive, until he finally crossed that endless expanse and reached her. But just as he touched her back, her body rolled over and fell with a dull thud to the floor, her special Sunday clothes splattered with blood.

Dawie continues, his composure now broken, his voice cracking and trembling with tears that have been, he said, a very long time – five years, in fact – in coming: 'I've never cried since I lost my wife other than to have silent cries. I've never had an emotional outburst till now. When... when Mr Makoma here [the young man who was 17 at the time he took part in the church attack] was testifying, he talked about his own tortures in prison, and that he was suicidal at times, but that he never once cried. I thought to myself – and I passed the TRC lawyer a note – to please bring your cross-examination to an end. Because what are we doing here? The truth, yes. But then I looked at the way in which he, Makoma, answered you. All his anger. And I thought that he cannot be reconciled.'

Then, in a final and painfully wrenching scene Dawie Ackerman, now openly weeping, asks the three young applicants to turn their averted faces to look at him directly and remember which of them shot Marita in her long blue coat. Makoma looks terrified, as if he is seeing Hamlet's father's ghost. He nervously bites his lower lip and slowly shakes his head. No, he cannot remember – neither Marita nor her long, blue coat. But all three young men apologize to Dawie. Makoma is the most affected: 'We are truly sorry for what we have done. But it was not intentional. It was the situation in South Africa. Although people died we did not do that out of our own will. It was the situation we were living under. And now we are asking you please, do forgive us.'

Dawie Ackerman did give Makoma his

forgiveness and he withdrew his formal, legal objection to the young men's receiving amnesty from the state. But while some seem to have experienced a real catharsis through the TRC process, young Makoma has yet to find any such emotional relief. He said to the girl whose mother he had killed about the attack: 'Yah, I had feelings then. It was bad. But no matter how I feel now, at this moment, that what I did was bad, there is nothing I can do. The people are dead. How I feel cannot change anything.' As a 'strong' and 'disciplined' PAC militant, Makoma still feels that all these emotional performances are unseemly and just a little bit beside the point.

Albie Sachs expressed the wish that there could be more 'felt emotion' by the perpetrators of political violence. He referred to those who seem unmoved by the TRC process, who (like PW Botha and Winnie Mandela) have refused the new history, and who remain frozen in the past. But the TRC process has in fact opened up new emotional spaces where conversations and actions that were once impossible, even unthinkable, are now happening. The unlikely encounters between perpetrators and victims, who are beginning to empathize with each other's situation, is an extraordinary case in point. And I think of the ordinary Afrikaner couple with very concerned looks on their faces who approached me one day on the steps of St. George's Cathedral in Cape Town (Archbishop Tutu's church). 'Where can we find the Bishop?' they asked.

'Oh, he's a very busy man,' I said. 'I'm sure he's not here now.' They both looked crestfallen.

'What did you want to see him about?'

'We want to confess to the Truth Commission. We did not treat black people very well and now we want to make a fresh start.'

I explained that the TRC was a very formal process 'with lawyers and official papers' and that it was meant for murderers and torturers and not for ordinary people

who could have behaved better. But the real effects of the TRC will perhaps be felt in small ripple effects like these and, hopefully, in various community circles. As part of Father Lapsley's 'Healing the Memories' forums, some of these healing retreats are reserved for those who were neither victims nor perpetrators, but people who, all the same, were hurt, diminished, traumatized and/or compromised by the apartheid state and the violent struggle against it.

And some have been redeemed, such as

Perpetrators are asked to give 'eye contact' to those who were hurt and wronged

Hennie, an Afrikaner and a private security guard. I ran into Hennie in the streets of Cape Town during a spontaneous celebration of South Africa's victory in the All-Africa Soccer Cup in February 1996. Hennie was very excited, almost emotionally overwrought, and he didn't know quite how to explain to me the magnitude and significance of that magical moment. 'Did you see the game?' he asked. I did, I said, on a big screen in a packed bar.

'Both goals?'

'Yes, indeed'

'And did you see our President right there out on the field?'

'Yes.'

'Can you possibly know what this means for us?' And without waiting for an answer, Hennie told me: 'It means we are not 100-per-cent bad. It means God is willing to forgive us. That He would give to us – of all people – such great heroes! It is a sign that we are going in a good way now. We are not hated any more. Oh, how can I explain this? It's like before we were Fat Elvis: sick, disgusting, ugly. Now we are like skinny Elvis: young, handsome, healthy. In the New South Africa we have all been reborn.'

Nancy Scheper-Hughes is a professor of anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley. She is a frequent contributor to the *NI*.



WAR

In recorded history since 3600 BC, over 14,500 major wars have killed close to four billion people – two-thirds of the current world population.¹



THE CASUALTIES OF CONFLICT

In armed conflicts since 1945, 90 per cent of casualties have compared to 50 per cent in the Second World War and 10 per cent in the First.² The planning and execution of war remains controlled by men, and women and children are the main victims of violence in war.

KILLER KIDS

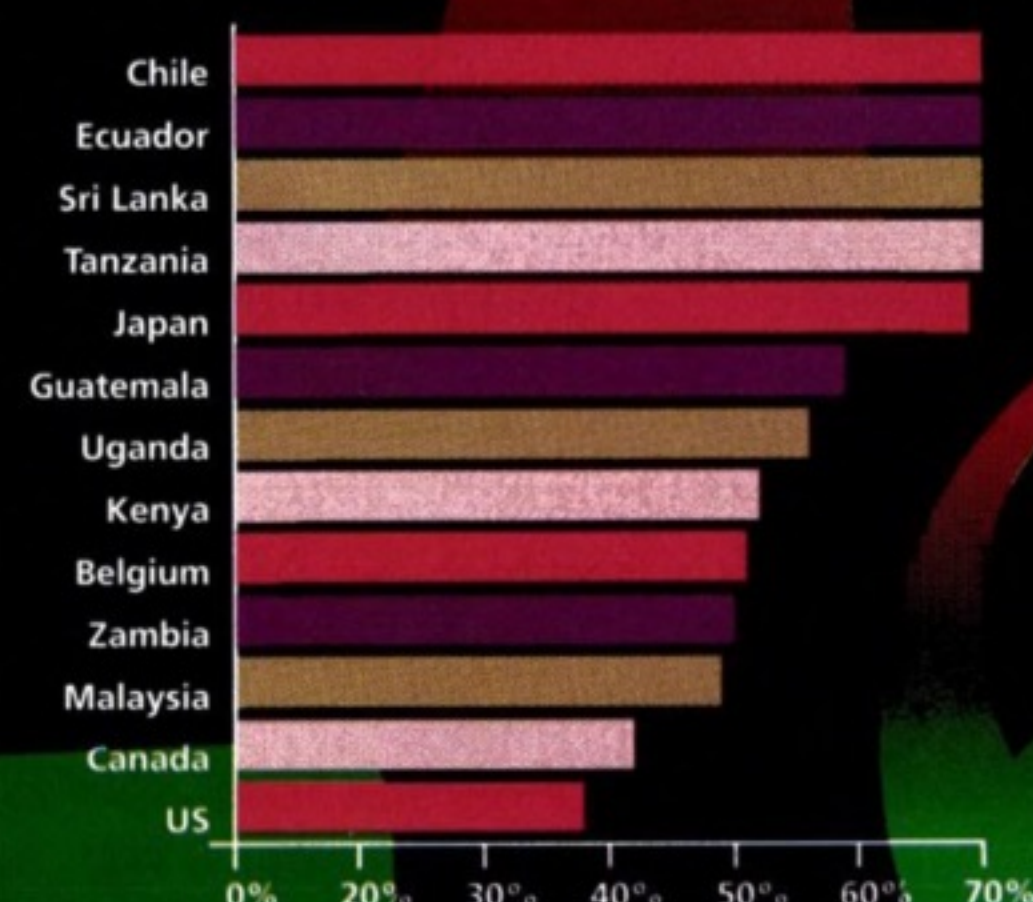
A contribution to the militarization of society is to socialize children to think violence and war are justifiable and glorious. From military and weapons-industry recruitment schemes to action-hero movies, it creates killers.

- There are at least 250,000 child soldiers fighting in armed conflicts.
- Most countries consider young soldiers 'volunteers'. But in some, they are involved – in Uganda around 8,000 children have been abducted to fight as soldiers or prostitutes.³
- Britain's Manchester airport has had more than 1,000 security checks caused by children taking toy guns on holiday.⁴
- By the age of 16 an American child has seen, on average, 10,000 acts of violence on television.⁵

WAR ON THE HOMEFRONT

Even in peacetime, women are far more likely to experience violence than men – for example one out of every six pregnant women is battered.

Percentages of women reporting physical abuse by male partner⁸



RULE OF LAW

International co-operation and law can support local peace processes.

Two Harvard University professors propose an international convention making it a crime for individuals, such as scientists and chief executive officers, to engage in the production of chemical and biological weapons, thus limiting the access of terrorist groups or governments to this capability. Such treaties are already in effect regarding piracy, genocide, aeroplane-hijacking and harming diplomats on duty.⁹

International courts can offer a system of justice across borders. But they must be backed by political will and resources – while the Nuremberg Court at the end of World War Two was given 2,000 prosecutions staff, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has less than 50.⁶

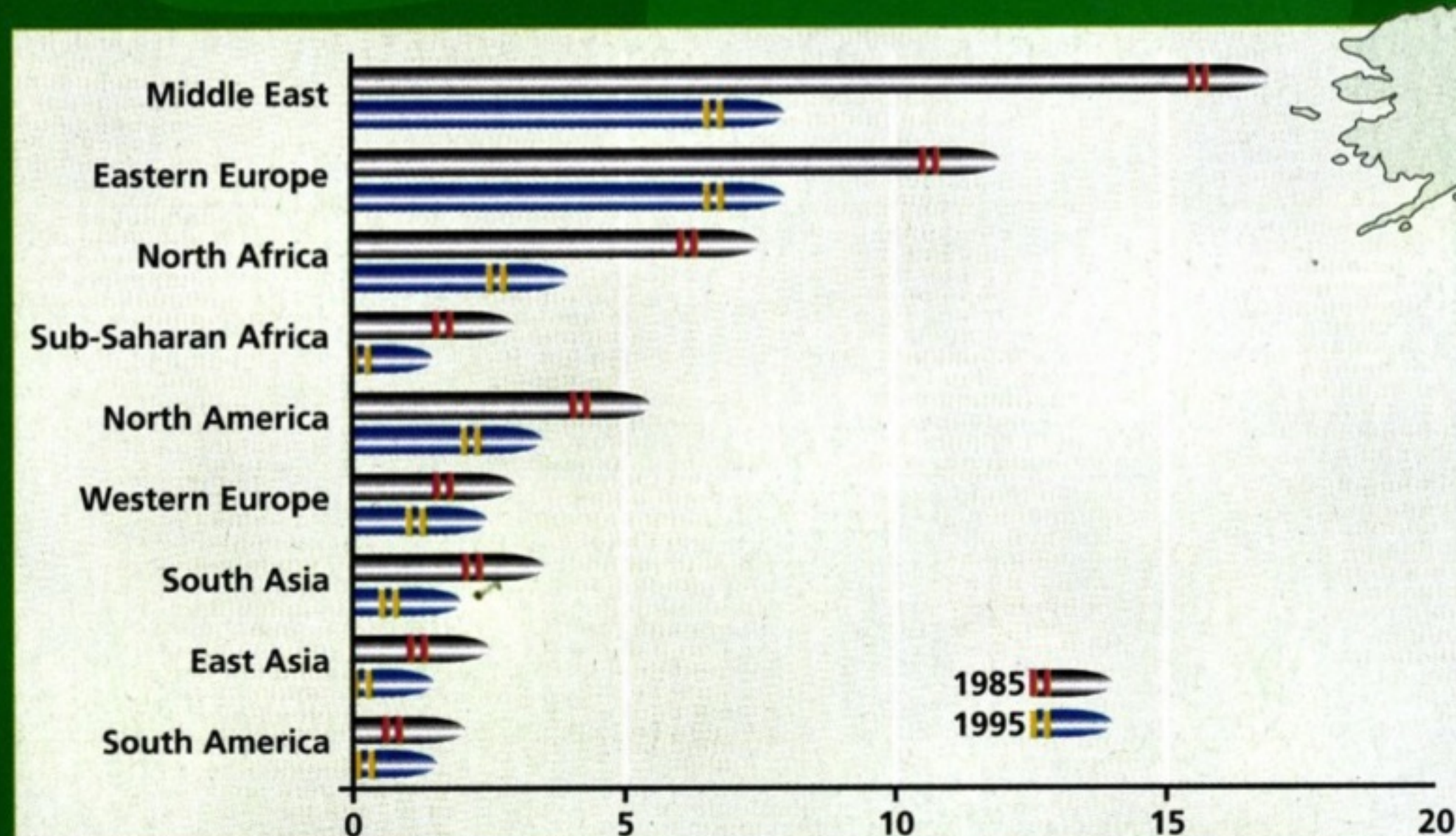
A treaty has been signed to establish an International Criminal Court – a UN body which would be able to hear charges of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

THE PRICE OF PEACE

Many individual countries spend over the three-per-cent average of GDP that the world spends on defence – more than half of the Cambodian national budget (around 50 per cent of which is supplied by foreign aid) is spent on defence and security.¹⁰

Around 85 countries have undergone some sort of disarmament since the end of the Cold War in 1989, but 69 nations have been increasing their stock of weapons – mostly Majority World countries buying from the richer ones.¹ Disarmament could potentially release large amounts of money for development.

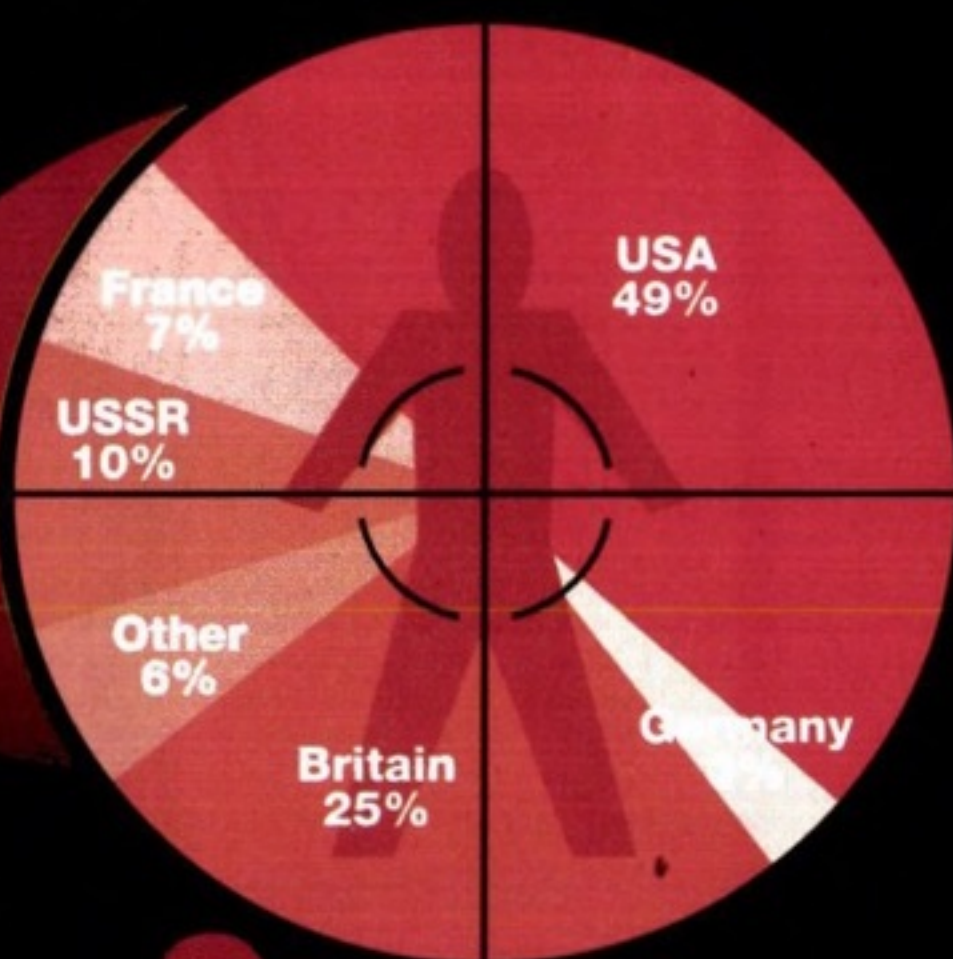
Military expenditure as percentage of GDP¹¹



THE WARMONGERS

Governments and national leaders are often the most horrific perpetrators of violence. Torture occurs in more than 100 countries and is carried out as part of government policy in at least 40.⁶ And governments form a crucial part of the military-industrial complex that is responsible for churning out the weapons and methods of war.

Main Arms Exporters¹



THE WORLD'S BIGGEST WARMONGERS

UNITED STATES

- World's biggest arms exporter – supplies around 40 per cent of the developing world's arms.¹
- Military budget as large as the next ten top-spending countries combined.
- 2.4 million troops.
- Involved in escalating numerous conflicts outside its own borders, on average the US has used arms abroad every year for the past 200 years.
- Current rationale for high spending on defence includes declaration of 'war on terrorism' – since 1980 on average fewer than 10 Americans have been killed by terrorists per year.⁹



THIERRY CHARLIER / CAMERA PRESS

BRITAIN

- World's second-largest arms exporter with a 25 per cent share of the legal global market.¹
- Military budget fifth largest in the world.
- 240,000 troops.
- Between 1990 and 1994, supplied 13 per cent of total arms exports to sub-Saharan Africa – while at war from 1987 to 1994, Angola received \$7.3 billion worth of British arms.¹⁰
- Current leaders in the 'privatization of war' – Britain is home to the four largest mercenary companies.



RICHARD OPEN / CAMERA PRESS

THE PEACEMAKERS

Only a third of all civil wars that occurred after 1800 have ended through negotiations. Since 1945 around 25 per cent of conflicts have been solved by negotiations. But recently compromise settlements are becoming more prevalent such as in the cases of Liberia, El Salvador and Guatemala.²

CONFLICT AND COMPROMISE - A WORLD MAP

- Key:
- High-Intensity Conflict (killing over 1,000 people in 1998)
 - Low-Intensity Conflict
 - Negotiations between parties or peace process under way



Conflict with 1000 people-related per year is defined as a Pledge Union. 1. Rupesinghe & Naraghi Anderlini, 2. Civil Peace (Pluto 1998). 3. Development No 44 1998. 4. Peace Matters 1998. 5. US Bureau of the Census, Population Reports, No 423. 6. Gemini service. 7. International Planned Parenthood. 8. World Health Organization. 9. The Nation No 15. 10. Edmund Cairns, A Safer Future 1997. 11. Understanding Global Issues No 4 1998.



MARTIN ADLER / PANOS

Ironically, I am the offspring of two parents – one Aboriginal and the other non-Aboriginal – who both experienced removal and institutionalization for different reasons.

My father was born in England, where he was placed in the care of a Dr Barnardos Orphanage. When he was ten years old, he was shipped out to Western Australia to the Fairbridge Children's Farm. My mother and her sister, meanwhile, were taken away from my grandparents and placed in the care of the Catholic nuns at the Home of The Good Shepherd, where they were strongly encouraged to take up the Christian faith and become nuns.

The pattern was repeated in my own childhood. In 1962, at ten years of age, along with my six brothers and sisters, I was taken from my parents and extended family and placed in Sister Kate's Children's Home. There were about 12 cottages in the grounds of the Home and families were broken up and put into separate ones. My brothers and sisters and I were scattered between at least four of them. It was terrible, as we weren't used to being apart. The shock of going from the richness of family life to this isolated, lonely and alien environment was almost more than I could bear. There was no sense of family, affection or personal attention. This made it very difficult for me to relate to people later in life.

My brother Graeme and I were fair-skinned and to the people running the Home, this meant we were more white than black – even though our whole life so far had been spent with our own family and

The stolen ones

At least a tenth of Aboriginal children were forcibly removed from their families from 1910 to 1970. **Tjalaminu Mia**, taken when she was ten, demands that Australians treat these festering wounds.

heritage. It seemed at times these carers were determined to force us to forget our culture and make us white. I had gone from being boisterous and outgoing to being very introverted – I had to go inside myself to survive.

It was only after we had all grown up and were able to talk with Mum about some of the things that had happened to us

that we began to understand on a deeper level the terrible manipulation. This manipulation was designed to break down the strong bonding that existed in most Aboriginal families. They wanted us to think our families were not interested in us, so that we would leave our heritage behind and take our place in 'white' society. This experience made all of us confused, hurt and insecure for a very long time. But slowly, things have turned around for us, though only after a traumatic road travelled to adulthood, maturity and for some of us – happiness and inner peace.

In hindsight, I can see all the negative ways in which institutionalization damaged the lives of my brothers, sisters and me and how it made it hard for us to reconcile with our mother and each other as a family. *Bringing Them Home*, the recent report of the National Inquiry into the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were separated from their families, records this grief and unresolved trauma suffered by successive generations of people – which has in turn resulted in violence, alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide, crime, family breakdown and widespread health problems.

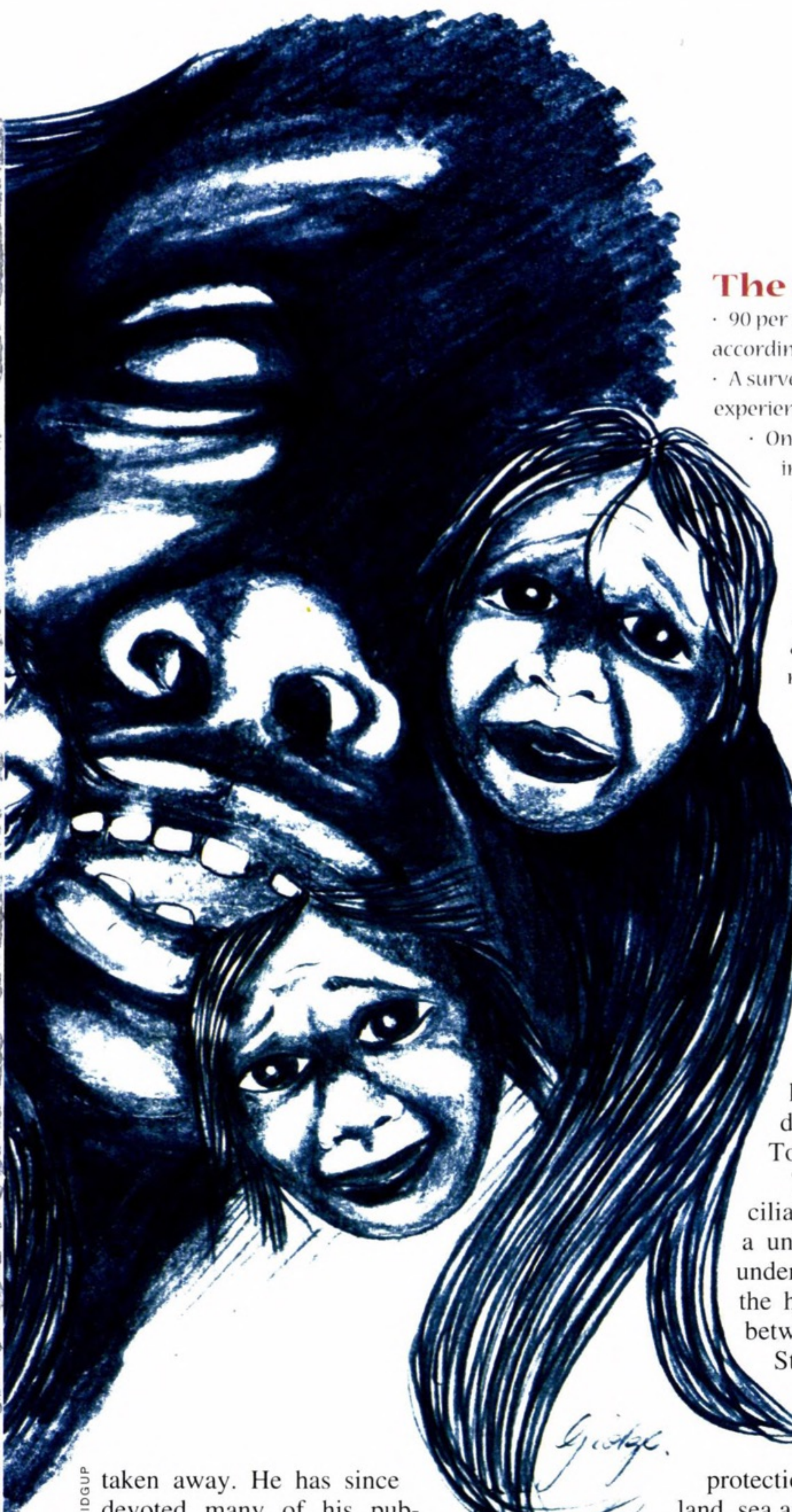
My brother Graeme (who later spent more than a decade in custody) and I were separated from each other as children (which we call *coolungar*) when we were

Coolungar Thieves by Graeme Dixon

Nigh! Listen! Can you hear
the anguished cry of a mother's
tears
Streaming down a face, contorted
with fear
Shooh! Hear her now plead
to hard men in black suits
Who invaded her womb
to steal her precious fruit
Be quiet! And you will hear
a breeze whispering through
ghostly trees
'Tis the whimper of stolen children
who have vivid memories
Of poor mummy and daddy
falling to their knees
Begging the Wajella's God
to please – set our Coolungars free
Bellai, Manatji! Beware
of their bold, cold stares
Those icy, snake eyes
are looking down where
Little sister, and baby brother

lay hidden, right there
Don't move, don't breathe, be still
the Devil is near
Mummy! Daddy! Here they come –
run!
scattered seeds in the breeze
Head for Yonga creek
where Great Uncle will be
Great Uncle won't let the Wajellas
take thee
he'll fight to the last
like he did at Gallipoli
But even uncle couldn't beat
this force mightier than we
Could ever imagine
in our wildest dreams
Thus with batons they sunk
proud unc' to his knees
Into the belly of the beast they flung
Brotherboy, sistergirl and me
Nyorn! My poor uncle laying
sprawled
by the sacred waterhole

Blood dripping from a wound
that cut deep to his soul
He once fought for freedom
In another's country
Now laying broken in his heartland
denied justice and dignity
Shhh! Quiet now Coolungars
don't fret for mummy's song
The Briddea will hear you
and preach that 'tis wrong
to pine for lesser beings
with paganistic ways
He'll flog us, in the name of Jesus
then for our souls he will pray
Faraway, camp quiet, no children
like a midnight cemetery
Tears hard like gravel
too painful to set free
Vacant stunned faces
still unable to believe
The evil, cruel arrogance
of those demonic, Coolungar
Thieves.



The stolen generation

- 90 per cent of stolen Aboriginal Australians have suffered from chronic depression, according to a study of Aboriginal mental health in Melbourne.
- A survey of 483 stolen Aboriginal youths in Western Australia found two thirds had experienced physical abuse.
- One in every six stolen Aboriginal Australians who gave statements to a national inquiry said they had been sexually abused.
- In Victoria 90 per cent of Aboriginal people seeking legal assistance for criminal court cases had been taken from their parents and adopted, fostered or institutionalized.
- Removal of children from Aboriginal families often prevented their learning of Aboriginal language, culture and traditional responsibilities. This impairs their ability to establish cultural links with the land in order to seek land rights under the national Native Title Act.

Source: *Bringing them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*
(www.austlii.edu.au/au/special/rsjproject/rsjlibrary/hreoc/stolen/)

families. We were caught up in a system not of our making, and those good-hearted and well-intentioned people, who unwittingly supported those policies and the process of removal, helped to denigrate and destroy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life.

The spirit of future reconciliation, which leads towards a united Australia, starts with understanding and accepting the history of this relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community.

We continue to fight patriotically for the protection and well-being of the land, sea and the freedom of our people in various ways.

For thousands of years, traditional ownership and custodianship has established a caretaker relationship with the land that centres on customs and

the 'Dreaming'. The Dreaming encompasses the past, the present and the future, reinforcing the culture and land as a continuum – highly valued and affirmed for future generations.

From the time of European invasion, indigenous people were forced off their land – dispossessed – which had devastating effects on them. Despite this, we still remain deeply connected to our country (our place of origin) with strong spiritual beliefs and a deep sense of custodial responsibility to land, tradition and each other.

In a few instances this is being sus-

tained in history-making cases via the High Court and Parliament – the High Court ruling on the Mabo case pressured the Federal Government to make laws on Native Title which took effect in 1994. Since then, there have been other rights acknowledged and given back to the people, as with the Wik people of northern Queensland and now, following a recent court ruling, with the Miriwung Gajerrong people in the far north-west of Western Australia.

If true reconciliation is to permeate throughout society, then non-indigenous Australians must cultivate a deeper understanding of the extreme effects of removing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples from their land and family. The nation as a whole must take responsibility before healing can occur.

Tjalaminu Mia is a Research Fellow at the Centre of Indigenous History and the Arts at the University of Western Australia.

Graeme Dixon is a poet, author of *Holocaust Island*, music student and sometime lecturer on Aboriginal history and social-justice issues.

Ron Gidgup is an artist, fashion designer and youth workshop facilitator.

© Tjalaminu Mia, Graeme Dixon, Ron Gidgup.

taken away. He has since devoted many of his published poems to conveying the pain suffered by us and by all the other uprooted Aboriginal children (see *Coolungar Thieves*, left).

The scale of this crime, and the resulting trauma and legacy, by today's standards fits the United Nations' established conditions of genocide. Aboriginal activist Mick Dodson explains: 'Genocide is not just the physical destruction of a people – and Australia signed the Genocide Convention – but genocide includes the forced removal of children from one group to another group. And the best outcome, according to the authorities, depended on their being de-Aboriginalized, if you like, and made into white fellas. That became official national policy in I think 1937, and it was the official policy in some jurisdictions up until the mid-1980s.'

However well-intentioned, religious and committed those people were, it doesn't detract from the fact that a terrible crime was committed against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their

Reunited at last – Graeme (top row, far right), Tjalaminu (top row, second from right) and family.



Kosovo — death of de

Kosovo is counting the deadly cost of a year-long conflict. A province of Serbia, Kosovo has an ethnic Albanian majority which seeks self-rule. Over 2,000 people have died and 300,000 been displaced in Europe's newest bloody war.

PRISHTINA, KOSOVO

June 1998

Albanians demonstrate against Milosevic's violent campaign in the province. But groups opposed to Milosevic's rule in Serbia remain silent during the Albanian protests. Serbs see this province as the cradle of Serb nationalism: the defeat of Prince Lazlo by Ottoman Turks at Kosovo Polje in 1389 became a symbol of resistance. Turkish rule did not end until Serbia was recognized as a state in 1878. Meanwhile the Albanians argue that they are Kosovo's indigenous inhabitants, descendants of the ancient Illyrians.



TOMISLAV PETERNEK / SYGMA

TROPOJA, ALBANIA

13 June 1998

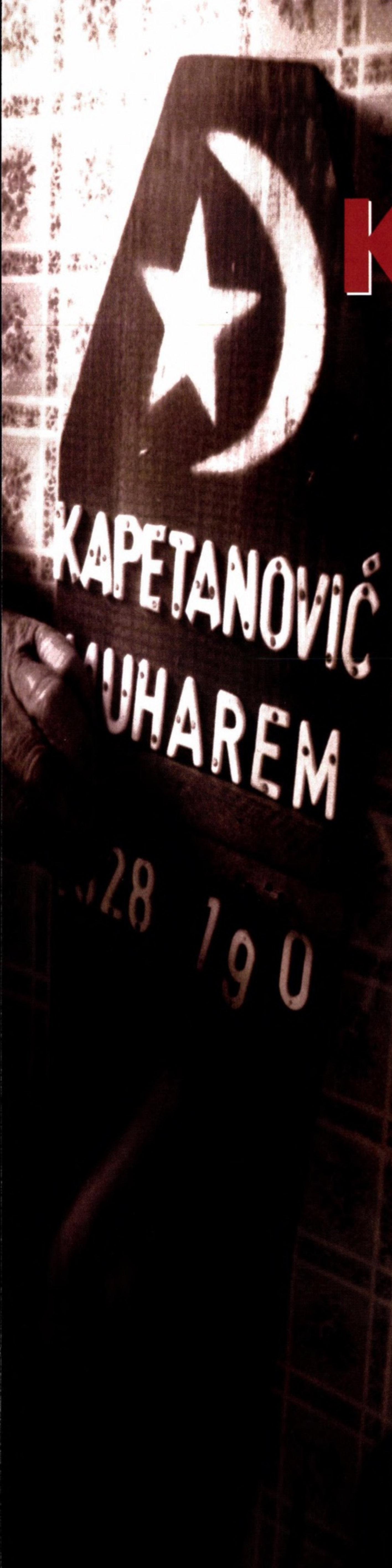
Kosovars who have fled to Albania listen as the leader of the Democratic Party, Sali Berisha, appeals to the parties involved in Kosovo to give up their arms. He says:

'Kosova's freedoms and rights will not come as a gift from anyone, and their problems will not be solved in Tirana, Belgrade or in Washington, London and Paris... They will be solved in Prishtina and the towns and villages of Kosovo.'



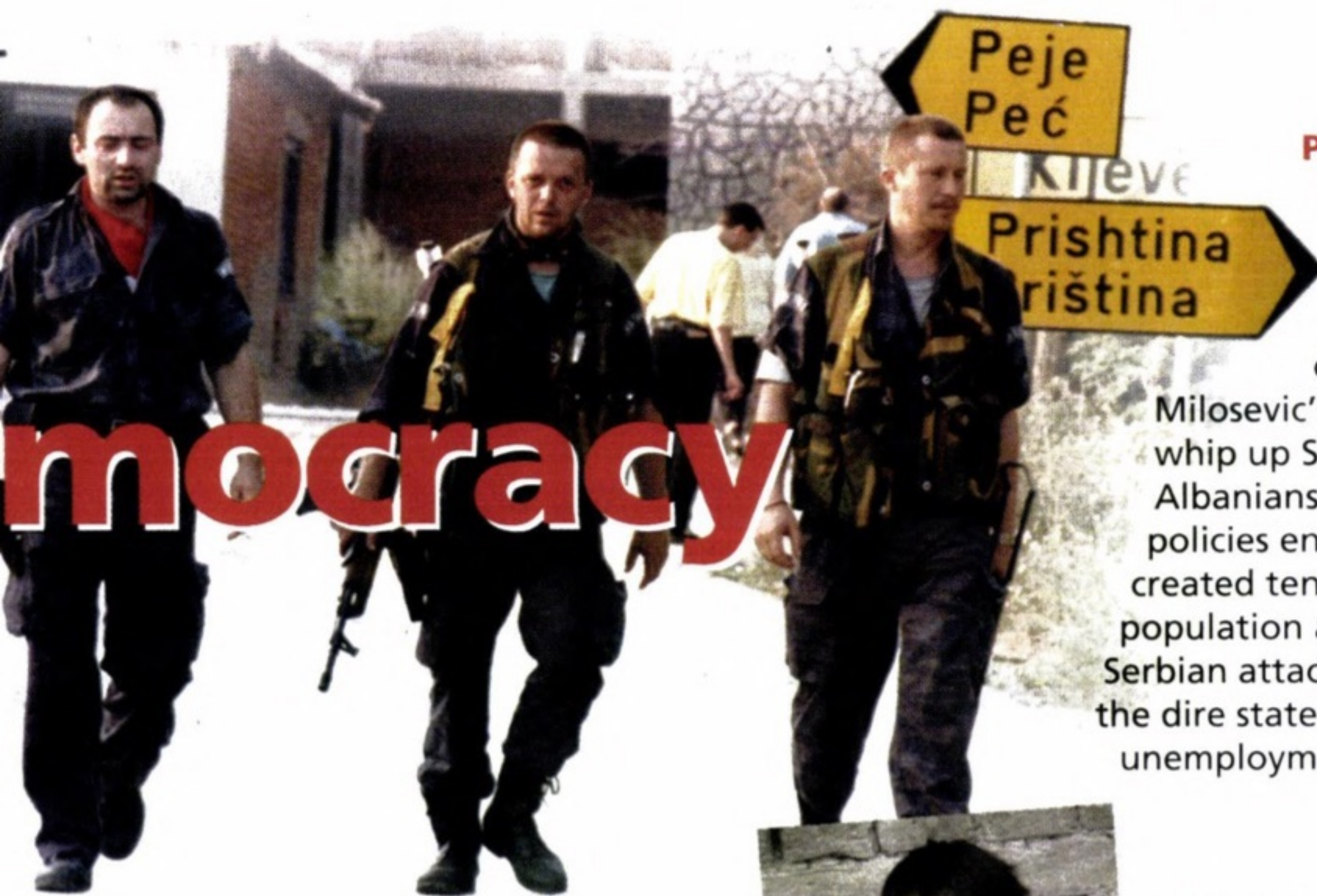
SION TOUHIG / SYGMA

ALEX SMAILES



PEACE & RECONCILIATION

ETHNIC CONFLICT



PRISHTINAPEC ROAD, KOSOVO 24 July 1998

Serbian soldiers take back this strategic highway from the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Long before the KLA appeared, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic began the violent clampdown on Kosovo. An ambitious bureaucrat, Milosevic's rise to power in 1988 was due to his ability to whip up Serb ethnic nationalism and fear of the ethnic Albanians over the Kosovo issue. Milosevic's hardline policies encouraged wars in Croatia and Bosnia and have created tension in Serbia itself, where only two-thirds of the population are actually ethnic Serbs. Now many say the Serbian attacks in Kosovo are a bid to divert attention from the dire state of the Serb economy, hit by 25-per-cent unemployment and international sanctions.

democracy



LLAUSHA DRENICA REGION, KOSOVO January 1999

Arbnora, who is nine, fled her village when it was attacked last summer. She says: 'I miss my school friends who have not come back. In my old class there were 30, now we are 8.' Arbnora and her family are among the few coming back since the 'ceasefire' in October 1998 – there are still 210,000 people displaced in Kosovo.

Meanwhile an elderly woman says goodbye to Kosovo and heads to Macedonia to

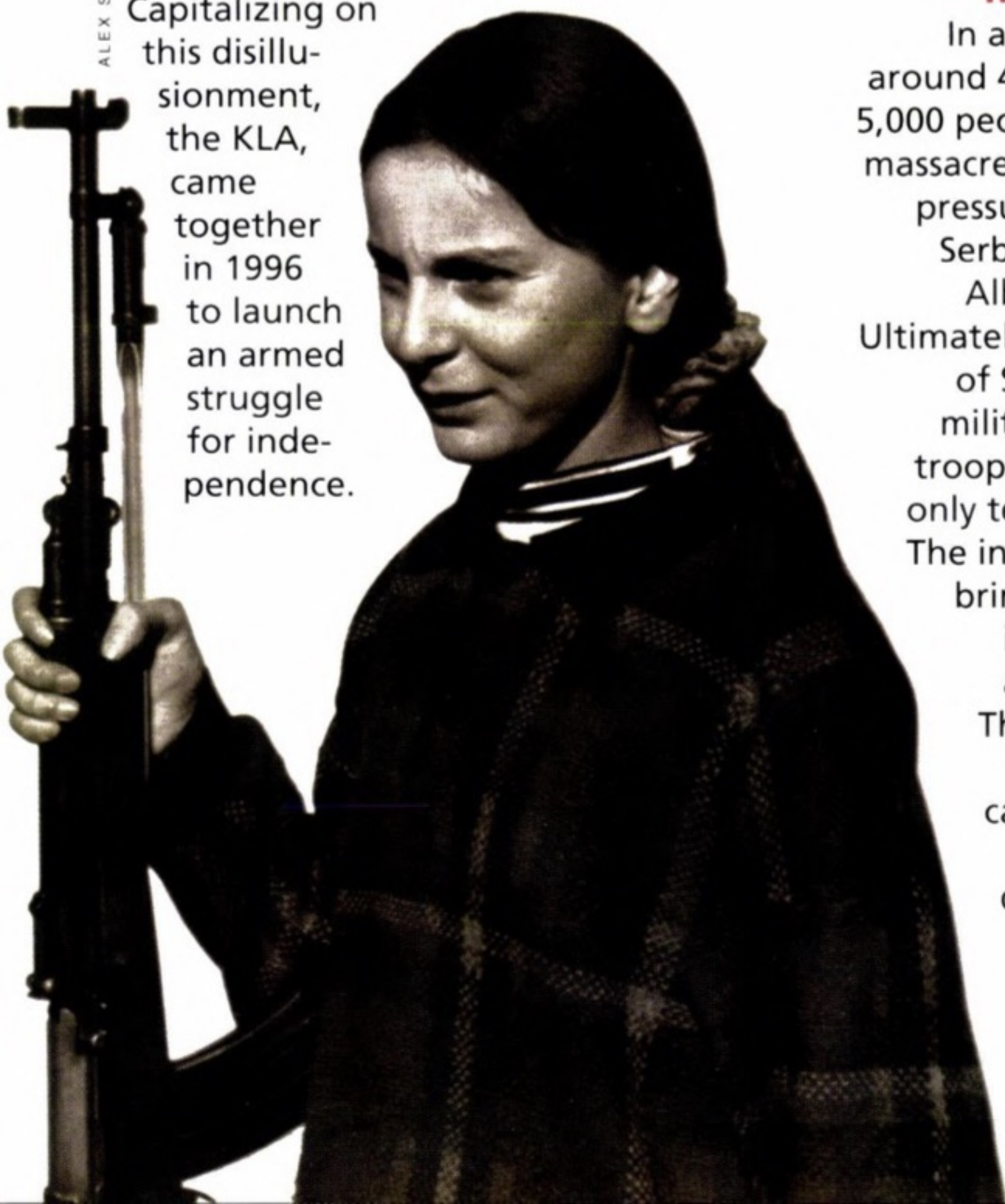
escape the violence. Many have crossed borders: at least 8,000 Kosovar refugees are in Britain, 35,000 in Germany, 22,000 in Switzerland, 10,000 in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 20,000 in Serbia, 25,000 in Montenegro, 3,000 in Macedonia and 18,500 in Albania.



DRENICA, KOSOVO January 1999

A 12-year-old Albanian girl, whose KLA father is second-in-command in the region, is armed and ready to fight. Ethnic Albanians who had followed pacifist leader Ibrahim Rugova through years of repression and harassment were shocked that the 1995 Dayton Accord, which ended the war in Bosnia and was hammered out by the international community, still did not deal with Kosovo's demands for self-rule and an end to Serbian human-rights abuses. Capitalizing on

this disillusionment, the KLA, came together in 1996 to launch an armed struggle for independence.



RECAK, KOSOVO 15 January 1999

In an attack by Serbian armed forces, around 40 ethnic Albanians are killed and 5,000 people flee Recak. The horror of the massacre catalyzes international and local pressure for negotiations between the Serbian Government and local ethnic Albanians which begin in February. Ultimately the conflict in Kosovo is a crisis of Serbian democracy. International military action in Kosovo – airstrikes, troop deployments, no-fly zones – can only temporarily change the situation. The international community needs to bring Serbs and Albanians together in talks that embrace moderates and pacifists as well as militants. Then the slow process of learning to negotiate and settle conflicts can begin. But if this process is to be meaningful, Serbia must be democratized and human rights guaranteed – regardless of the status of Kosovo.





ALIANA / GAMMA / FRANK SPOONER

Harassing the House of Lords – protesters in London demand Pinochet be brought to trial.

Clipping the Condor's claws



THE arrest of retired General Augusto Pinochet, unrepentant tyrant, seemed impossible. Only hours after the police quietly arrived at the London Clinic, on 16 October 1998, but before it was publicly known, I was busy exhorting over 300 people at a meeting to demand his arrest and make public their disgust at Pinochet's visit to Britain in search of new arms deals.

It is hard to describe the impact of the glorious news. It was as though fortifications which had seemed unbreachable had suddenly collapsed, as if some imposed unnatural silence were suddenly rent by a howl. Most victims of human-rights violations in South America have seen all their desire for justice smashed against the solid walls of impunity and amnesty. They have

In the aftermath of Pinochet's arrest, **Marcela López Levy** applauds the capture of Operation Condor's cagey killers.

lived recounting their experiences and met studied silences.

I did not know yet that the ensuing legal battle would mean a huge step forward, in a real and tangible way, for international human rights. All I knew then was that for every South American, hope was revived – the region's best-protected human-rights violator stood accused, at last.

Victims and survivors

The people who began to chip away at his fortifications belonged to the Spanish-based organizations of victims from Chile

and Argentina and their relatives. They brought private cases to the Spanish courts. The idea of appealing to foreign courts originated in Italy where in 1983 criminal procedures against Argentinian military officers accused of disappearing Italian citizens were begun. Independently, Captain Alfredo Astiz – an infamously unrepentant torturer, the man who infiltrated the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo – was tried and found guilty in France of the deaths of two French nuns.

These cases were based on the principle that a country can pursue crimes committed

against their citizens, regardless of where or by whom the crimes have been committed – a process known as the right of extraterritoriality. But the Spanish judges went much further. To claim their right to universal jurisdiction, they made use of international criminal law which has existed since the Nuremberg trials of Nazi leaders. Since 1996, they have been investigating deaths during the brutal dictatorships of the 1970s in Argentina and Chile.

The cases were eventually consolidated under the responsibility of judge Baltazar Garzón, who also began to investigate *Operación Condor*, the code name for military co-operation in the campaign of disappearances and murder across the countries of the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia and Brazil).

Scene of the crimes

The 1973 coup in Chile, led by General Augusto Pinochet, was a violent suspension of constitutional rule in a country with a long democratic tradition. This followed a trend in the region, where Brazil had been under military rule since 1964, Bolivia since 1971, while Uruguay also succumbed in 1973. Uruguay had a history of democratic and reformist governments, which suffered a huge reversal: Amnesty International calculated that in 1976 it had more political prisoners per capita than any other nation on earth. Argentina, although prone to coups from men in uniform for the best part of 50 years, was still unprepared for the scale of indiscriminate violence the armed forces unleashed in 1976. To complete the picture, there was Paraguay, since 1954 under the heavy armed hand of General Alfredo Stroessner, a man praised by Richard Nixon as a model anti-communist and accordingly well funded and trained by the US.

In the Cold War, National Security Doctrine was taught to the military corps across Latin America, both at home and on training trips to the US or Panama. South America took the global war to heart and the military produced their own vision of how to combat communism – they saw their 'Western-Christian' values as under attack from an atheist left which they polarized into an enemy to be fought to the death. The compromise and negotiation which characterizes democracies was deemed insufficient to deal with the perceived dangers of revolution. Annihilation and terror were the only way. So these military regimes collaborated via Operation Condor, believing that they were fighting a global war and they were all on the same side.

The scene was set for a foreseeable tragedy to become reality. The countries of

the Southern Cone were about to enter a dark period of their history, recovery from which is slow and painful.

All over the Southern Cone, tens of thousands were killed, 'disappeared', tortured, or fled into exile. But it is not the cold numbers which give a sense of the violence, but the extent to which the military despised and dehumanized their enemy through torture and even the theft of their children.

Disappearance was carried out on a massive scale, leaving no trace to be recovered, no remains to be buried and mourned by their loved ones. Disappearance does violence to the victim and to all those around them, leaving an emptiness which only grows, not diminishes, with time.

Chances of justice

Why are Latin American human-rights violators being tried far away from the scene of their crimes, in Europe? Is justice possible in Argentina and Chile?

In Argentina when the military took over in 1976 it sought to destroy not only the armed guerrillas but also all those who might in any way support them and then anyone else who might be involved in working for social change. Society at large was terrified. A significant number of people organized resistance. As early as 1975 a

Military regimes collaborated via Operation Condor, believing that they were fighting a global war and they were all on the same side

Permanent Assembly for Human Rights was formed, which began to monitor violations. In April 1977, a group of mothers first came together in Plaza de Mayo.

The political and social forces ranged against the Argentinian generals after the Malvinas/Falklands War meant that they could not tailor the transition to democracy to suit their requirements. They passed

a law pardoning all political crimes in 1983 before handing back power, but after elections the new Congress unanimously voted to revoke it and the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons was set up to investigate human-rights violations.

Within two months, criminal proceedings were instituted against the members of the military juntas and the alleged leaders of the armed organizations of the Left. In an unprecedented trial, the top commanders of the armed forces, including those who had held the position of Head of State, were sentenced for illegal detention, torture and homicide and put in prison. It seemed justice was possible even in the face of a powerful military establishment.

It was not to be so easy. Sectors of the military felt outraged that their war 'against subversion' had been redefined as state terrorism by the presiding judge. President Alfonsín had to deal with a number of armed insurrections which did, in effect, limit the possibilities for justice and therefore for democracy, creating pressure which led to laws being passed exempting those who had carried out crimes under superior orders and curtailing any new cases. The next elected president, Carlos Menem, then went on to pardon the few who had been imprisoned.

Retaining a civilian democracy was done at the expense of justice, although the original trial was a landmark in defending human rights. But Menem's pardon was not the end of the story. Relatives of the victims refused to give up. It took many years in the wilderness, when the Mothers and Grandmothers of the Disappeared were known as the 'locas', the madwomen. Their perseverance bore fruit when they were able to re-open cases against the military officers responsible for the disappearance of some 200 children, many born in illegal detention. In 1998, crimes related to their abduction have meant imprisonment again for members of the leading junta and others who evaded trial in the 1980s. And with the actions emanating from the Spanish courts, the pressure for action was stronger; suddenly justice was

Mothers of the disappeared – perseverance is finally reaping rewards.



RAFAEL WOLLMAN / GAMMA / FRANK SPOONER

back within sight.

In Chile, by contrast, the military dominated the process of 'democratization'. Pinochet remained head of state until 1990 and of the armed forces until March 1998. In 1978 he passed an Amnesty Law which has protected him and his military men from prosecution for human-rights abuses. He introduced a constitution in 1980 which provided the framework for a 'protected democracy'. Impunity, in Chile, has remained the norm – human-rights abuses are to be forgotten because they were part of a war against socialism. Pinochet's supporters now hysterically claim that the efforts to bring him to justice are a 'socialist conspiracy'.

The arrest of Pinochet, via an Interpol warrant and an agreement between Spain

and Britain under European terrorism legislation, is crucial. Every moment he has been detained has reduced his personal power in Chile. Every day has offered victims of his regime the feeling of being enabled to demand justice. Every week that passes, the world sees that democracy in Chile has been built on a divided society not at peace with itself. Every month since October 1998 has shown that even the military realize that the time for coups is over.

Amid the calls against trying criminals in other countries, despite the evidence of its usefulness in Chile and Argentina, the important thing to remember is that the international criminal law being used to pursue Pinochet has existed since 1945. Human rights have been recognized inter-

nationally since the 1948 Declaration, although in fact dating back at least to the French Revolution. What has changed is the political recognition of these rights.

In a way, Pinochet's supporters may be right – there is a conspiracy against him, a conspiracy of hope deriving from the recognition of rights that states have chosen to ignore. It reminds us that campaigning by a few does change the world, although we may have to wait decades, not years, for the results to come through. No tyrant should escape justice any longer – a precedent has been set, which we must use to continue improving our political culture. ■

Marcela López Levy is an Argentinian writer who works as a researcher and editor at the Latin America Bureau in London.

The dead tell tales

While Guatemalans mourn those murdered by war, a culture of violence is still alive and kicking, writes Sarah Elton.

The air was still on the morning Monseñor Gerardi's coffin was marched slowly around the crowded central square. Hundreds of people from all sectors of society tossed red and white carnations on the casket of the bishop, who people suspect was assassinated for his role as head of the project for the Recovery of Historical Memory (REMHI), which was created to unearth the history of civil-war human-rights abuses.

But no-one was shocked when the news of Gerardi's murder hit the streets last April. In the village of Ciudad Vieja, just outside Guatemala's capital, his death was announced to all residents over a loud speaker and the church bells rang for half an hour non-stop in memoria, but people continued their daily activities as usual. It simply was not surprising that Gerardi too would fall prey to the violence that has spilled over from the War into Guatemala's so-called peace – the 36-year-long civil war ended on 31 December 1996 with the signing of the final peace accord between the state and the left-wing guerrillas, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity.

Gerardi had been forced into exile in the early 1980s after denouncing the military's human-rights abuses against indigenous people. A decade later, his REMHI report says the military is to blame for the majority of the trauma. After conducting more than 6,000 interviews with both victims and perpetrators of the crimes, REMHI concluded that 79 per cent of all human-rights abuses during the War were carried out by the Army while the guerrillas were responsible for nine per cent. The document lists more than 55,000 severe human-rights violations, including 422 mass slaughters. The report also calls for victim compensation and underlines the importance of writing the horrors experienced during the War into the history books.

Only 48 hours after releasing the report, Gerardi was murdered. As he was returning home late one night, someone smashed his head with a concrete block as he climbed out of his car. The Catholic Church's human-rights office has announced that evidence exists that implicates the military in Gerardi's death. In an interview days after the assassination, Edgar Gutierrez, Co-ordinator of the REMHI project, said: 'This has had the impact of reliving the terror Guatemalans lived in the 1980s. It is like the nightmare never ended.' Judges, lawyers, human-rights activists and journalists are still subject to harassment and regularly receive death threats.

But it is not only people working for change who must confront violence in post-war Guatemala – everyone faces the daily risk of random assaults like kidnapping, murder and hijacking. The Mutual Support Group, a human-rights organization, said 1998 'was very difficult, despite being the second year of peace'. The group registered

850 human-rights violations last year, including 545 assassinations, 54 disappearances and 46 kidnappings.

This can be attributed to what Rosalinda Bran, an academic expert in security and politics in Guatemala City, calls a culture of violence. According to Bran, people have violent responses because they have lived for decades in an environment of war. 'Guatemalan society has assumed a bloody character since the war. Here, they rape, torture and murder you for your watch,' she says.

Judicial chaos means citizens have little confidence in the system and are turning to vigilante groups. Lynchings are growing increasingly common with 130 suspected criminals being killed by rural mobs since 1996.

'Logically violence breeds more violence. It is the conditioning of war,' says Bran. She believes it will take at least two generations to change attitudes in Guatemala and advocates achieving a culture of tolerance through education.

Others, such as Maya rights activist Keb Noj, want Guatemalans to look deeper into history. Violence in Guatemala today is the culmination of the oppression and the injustices the indigenous people have suffered for the last 500 years, he says. 'I know a lot about the human-rights abuses and murders in the 1980s. I know a lot about the governments. But when I turned 50, I wanted to know more about the history of my people,' he says.

Noj believes that to find peace in Guatemala indigenous people must be respected. In a country where the Maya form the most marginalized sector of society, this is a tough demand to implement.

As the hearse carrying Gerardi's body pulls away, the crowd begins to disperse. Now a new stage in Guatemalan history begins. The Maya who travelled by bus from the highlands to pay their respects to Gerardi will return to their villages. The human-rights activists will continue to struggle for change. In February 1999, the second stage of the REMHI project began, with volunteers returning to the sites of the interviews to ensure that the war is never forgotten. And Gerardi's legacy will be etched in the collective memory of the Guatemalan people. ●

Sarah Elton is a masters student in political science at the University of Toronto and a freelance writer/broadcaster.



PAUL SMITH/PANOS

'P'eople say that the sand was once an island with people and gardens and animals,' says Francis, gesturing towards a sandbar out in the ocean before us, 'but a giant octopus came along and – with his many arms and great waves of water – turned the island upside down. So now that sand that you see on top was once the bottom of the island, and the top of the island has been drowned. If you go out at night in a boat you will hear the sound of roosters crowing and people talking. But you have to go at night, quietly, to hear them.'

Francis and all the other people of Bougainville know what life is like in a world turned upside down. They have lived through the South Pacific's bloodiest conflict since World War Two – it lasted nine years until a ceasefire was declared in early 1998 between the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) and the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) with its local Resistance Army supporters. In what the outside world frequently calls a 'forgotten war', but which Bougainvilleans simply call 'the crisis', around 20,000 people – an eighth of the population – died due to the fighting or to the blockade imposed on the island by the Papua New Guinea Government.

A world turns upside down

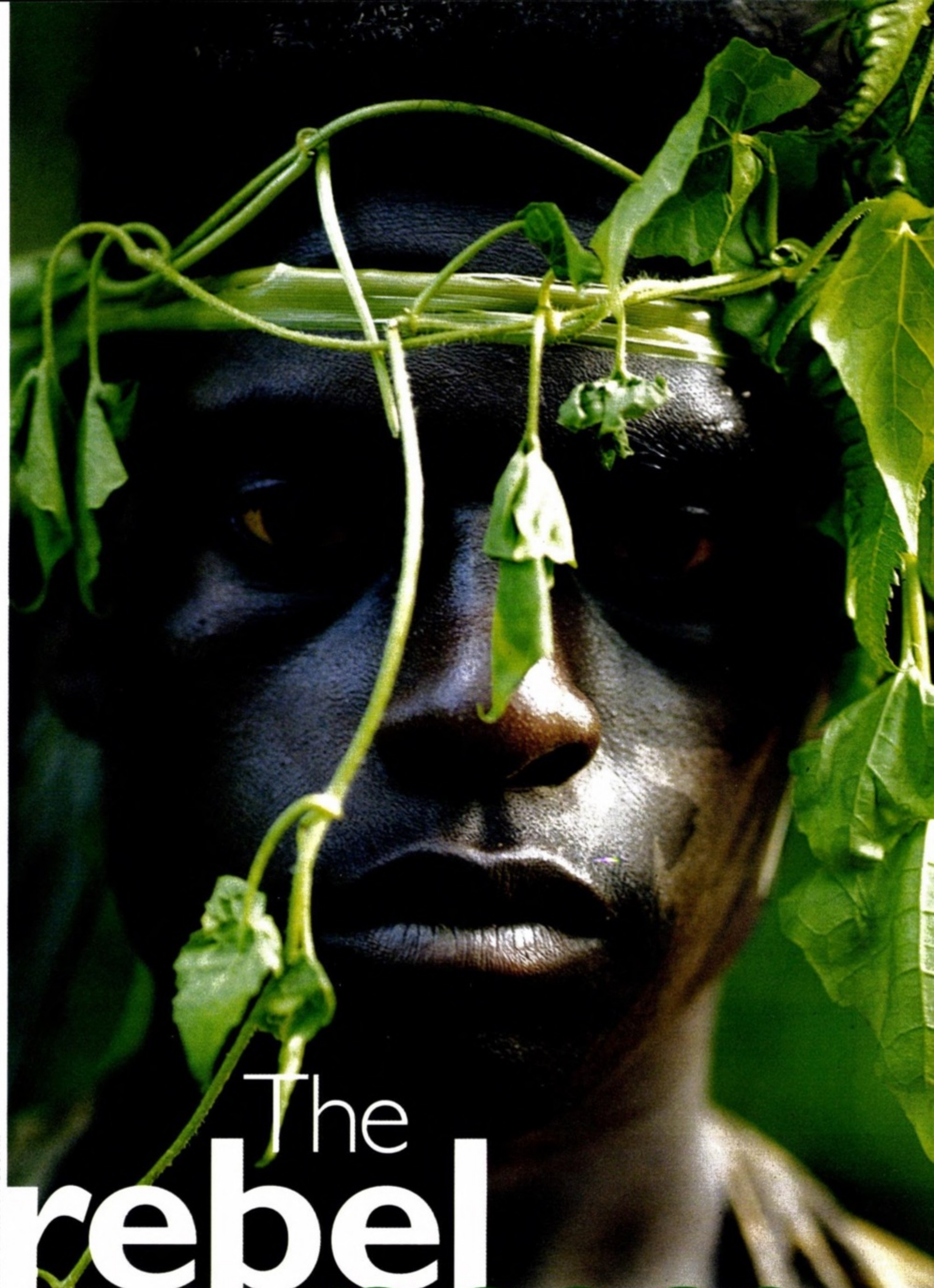
Francis is matter-of-fact about how he personally was catapulted into the conflict: 'The BRA came and everyone had to sign up. I was a young boy, wanted to be tough.' Francis is clearly proud that his clan name, 'Omi', means 'bad'.

His family, like so many others, was split by the conflict. His brother fought for the other side – PNG – and was killed.

His eyes cloud with tears when he describes the day when he tried to run the blockade to Bougainville from the Solomons. The PNGDF patrol boat saw them: 'Three friends of mine were shot. There was all their blood around me in the sea. And I just grabbed this piece of wood and was quiet and still so I would not get shot. I drifted, and drifted all night...'

'I was psychologically affected by the War,' he later admits, 'even now.' After drifting away from life as a BRA boy, he became a youth worker and now does workshops on the dangers of home-brewed alcohol and violence against women. 'People are surprised that I made it to this today but it was hard work and took many years,' he says before adding, with grave astonishment: 'I even saw a psychologist!'

The factors that turned Bougainville upside down are complicated and rooted in a history of foreign interference (see the *Octopus of War*, Page 29). But clearly the development of the Panguna copper mine,



ALEX SMAILES / ECOPIX

The rebel peace

Breaking the silence
of a secret war,

the people of Bougainville have chosen words
over weapons, discovers **Anouk Ride.**



which began in 1972, congealed Bougainvillean desire for autonomy. In what was to become the archetypal indigenous anti-mining land-rights struggle and the loudest wake-up call for the industry in the world, locals protested for 16 years. But they could not stop a hole six kilometres wide and four kilometres deep being bored into the central mountains of Bougainville island. Finally, the conflict became violent on 22 November 1988 when a disgruntled

mineworker raided Bougainville Copper Ltd's armoury and stole explosives which he used to destroy company installations. This fiery man, Francis Ona, was soon proclaimed President of Bougainville by secessionists and he led the newly formed BRA. Today Ona has rejected the peace process and thus has split with the majority of the BRA. Ona's few hundred rebels control the mine and the area around it. Even flying over this part of the island exposes

helicopters to gunfire.

In addition to the old grenades and guns left by the Japanese and Americans during the Second World War which were pieced together and replicated, the BRA was able to steal and capture a lot of equipment from the Resistance and PNGDF. The PNGDF in turn was supported by Australia, whose hands are submerged in this murky flow of arms. The Defence Co-operation Program between PNG and Australia includes supply of light and heavy weapons, all of which have been used in Bougainville in the blockade and fighting – it was Australian-supplied Iroquois helicopters that dumped civilians killed by the PNGDF into the sea following the 'St Valentine's Day Massacre' in 1990.

The Program also includes military training and advisers. Ironically, the commander of the BRA, Sam Kaona, undertook an Australian Officer Training Course in explosives at Portsea near Melbourne.

Papua New Guinea's destructive love

Around 20,000 people – an eighth of the population – died due to the fighting or to the blockade imposed on the island by the Papua New Guinea Government

affair with overseas military assistance grew to sickening proportions in March 1997 when the Government signed a contract reported to be worth \$31 million with Sandline International to retake central Bougainville by force using hired mercenaries. Amidst mass protests by PNG civilians and a military rebellion, the mercenaries were sent home. Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan stood down and Bill Skate came to power.

Willie Aga, a BRA man, says: 'I was not afraid when we heard the mercenaries were coming because I knew they would die. And we also knew we could get some



much better weapons off the mercenaries than we can off the PNGDF.'

Despite this attachment to weapons and violence by the BRA and PNG Government, when Skate came to power in mid-1997 each side seemed more optimistic that a non-violent solution was possible. A few people in Buka who still wear the prized yellow 'Election 97' T-shirts describe their jubilation as they oversaw the island's participation in national elections for the first time in a decade.

Skate addressed Bougainvilleans saying:

'I feel compelled by the grace of God that the time has come to say sorry and ask for your forgiveness.' And on 23 January 1998 all sides signed the 'Lincoln Agreement on Peace, Security and Development on Bougainville' – renouncing the use of armed force and violence and setting the date of 30 April as the

beginning of a 'permanent and irrevocable ceasefire'. So far this has held, despite the PNG Parliament's refusal to allow a referendum on the constitutional status of Bougainville.

Stifled voices are let free

As Bougainville was previously under a state of siege, the story of the crisis has only just been heard. When asked why peace has happened now, Willie Aga cites the most common reply: 'We were tired of war, tired of killing.' War-weariness seems to have beaten down most former fighters. Willie adds: 'The PNGDF couldn't win

because those men in Resistance, they are our brothers. We cannot keep killing our brothers and they do not want to kill us.'

The legacy of this disturbing experience is obvious in the volatile young men who have lived the War as fighters. They become frustrated or are too humiliated to go to school to learn how to read and write alongside people half their age. And, says youth worker Francis, 'they don't know how to just talk. It's difficult just to get them to talk. They consider themselves better because they've fought and they won't negotiate.' With boredom and homebrew, or jungle juice, in plentiful supply these youths are responsible for most of the 'law and order problems' which concern Bougainvilleans. Although they have just come out of a war, the islanders are horrified at the gangster crime they have seen or heard of in Port Moresby, PNG's capital and one of the most violent cities in the world.

Despite the 'bad' name Francis and other former fighters have, they are able to reject violence and be reintegrated into society. To do this they need employment or education but Willie says that aid donors are reluctant to fund projects which employ former killers. Still, he is far from despondent about the chances that people who lived through the War can hold the peace: 'When we were fighting I saw miracles – survival.'

People were forced out of the towns and villages into a life on the run in the jungle. Around 35,000-40,000 were coerced or fled into crowded government 'care centres' which many saw as prisons where people routinely suffered human-rights abuses. Other communities came under the control of the BRA and were forced to move with the fighters in their pursuit and retreat from the PNGDF.

Patricia from Arawa says: 'It was very hard up there in the bush. The BRA made us move each day with all our things. We had to make shelter under the trees so we could not be seen by the security forces flying overhead. After the crisis was over I went up there in a chopper. What a joke! You can see everything from up there! The BRA made fools of us.' And some women spent the crisis with their children hiding from both the BRA and the PNGDF, often becoming ill and perishing in harsh conditions, without access to medicines.

But the remarkable resilience that many people showed through the crisis has now been used to transform the island. In just a year Buka has been rebuilt from scratch, Arawa's local produce market thrives and flights from PNG are full of people coming and going for business or to see family now the blockade is over. The passion to rebuild Bougainville is palpable – such as the man who insisted on digging in the hot sun to lay telephone cables despite malaria, a



Armed and dangerous – Francis Ona has split with rebels who have embraced peace.

rapidly melting block of ice bandaged around his head and all attempts at dissuasion by his fellow workers.

At the same time, Bougainvilleans value independence and many worry about whether the large inflow of aid – \$64 million over five years from the Australian Government alone – implemented without grassroots control, will lead to a ‘handout mentality’. Many highlight the lack of local employment in aid projects. Mining remains one of the most sensitive topics and it is not even mentioned in any of the peace talks. Most Bougainvilleans use this as the yardstick for what they do not want – foreign economic control in any form, including top-down aid.

But international support is encouraged – a prominent example being the success of the Peace Monitoring Group. This group of organized and unarmed citizens of Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Fiji and Vanuatu patrols Bougainville in a bid to discourage violence or breaks of the ceasefire but also to spread the word about peace and its benefits. The Peace Monitoring Group, like the Peace Brigades (an international organization of human-rights monitors who are dispatched to trouble-spots), show that unarmed foreigners can be more effective peace police than armed ‘peacekeepers’ whose motives are inevitably seen as suspicious by locals.

Despite the common points of agreement that have helped keep the peace in

Bougainville, there are several topics the various parties to the process do not agree on and they are enjoying having the right to meet, debate and discuss. One conversation – between two supporters of different visions for Bougainville’s future – seemed to sum up how people felt about peace and its implications. Theresa Jaintong, a forceful organizer and rapid speaker from the District Women’s Council, does not support independence and describes herself as a moderate: ‘I don’t want to take sides. People from all sides come and we will embrace them if they want peace. During the crisis the women would tell both sides to stop fighting. And in the care centres we would tell the PNGDF where not to go. If the BRA or the Security Forces were doing some-

Show and tell – children who have only known war are finally going to school.

thing – an ambush or something – we would say to them “I cry for you now if you do not go out and fight. If you go out and get killed, I will not cry for you.” They listened to that.’

In ways like this the women are influential, she says: ‘They work for peace and were very important in creating this peace. The top – the official Bougainville Transitional Government – doesn’t matter. The women have a different approach. They are among the people. And they can create peace.’

At this stage we are interrupted by Ben Kamada, Chief Planner of the BRA, who is known for a quick temper as much as a quick mind. He had told me before that although he may fire mortars over a roundtable rather than a mountain these days, independence for Bougainville is his target.

‘The women got us killed,’ he says dismissively.

Theresa rolls her eyes and I get the feeling they have discussed this topic before. She attempts to ignore this comment: ‘He talks like this but he is a peacemaker. He allowed women from government-controlled areas and BRA areas to come together. He took care of me although he knew I was moderate.’

Ben will not be shrugged off: ‘I hate the women. I hate PNGDF. They’re all the same. I do not trust them. When we came down because our mothers told us, our chiefs told us, we got killed by the soldiers. The women talk like this because they did not fight; they did not suffer.’

Theresa’s mouth opens in shocked disgust. The argument is on. ‘Oh!’ she exclaims. ‘We had suffering, the women experienced great sadness. But we got together. In the care centres we formed a Council of Chiefs and organized ourselves. We made peace in ourselves and then we went out to make peace...’

Ben is adamant: ‘I am scared. I don’t



ALEX SMAILES / ECOPIX

Octopus of War

Eight tentacles reaching towards Bougainville's crisis

- 1 Louis de Bougainville ‘discovered’ the islands in 1768. When he landed on the northern island the people ran up to him saying ‘Buka? buka?’ meaning ‘What? What?’ and so this island became called Buka and the southern larger island became known as Bougainville.
- 2 Queen Victoria and Chancellor Bismarck drew a line on the map in 1884 which was to determine that Bougainville was administered by the Germans, separately from Bougainville’s ethnically and culturally similar Solomon Islands.
- 3 In 1918 Bougainville, with Papua New Guinea, came under Australian jurisdiction due to a League of Nations mandate; then in 1947 PNG became a United Nations Trust Territory for which Australia was responsible.
- 4 Two weeks before PNG was to receive independence in 1975, Bougainvilleans tried to pre-empt rule from Port Moresby by declaring independence. The Australians sent in riot police, a few Bougainvillean leaders were arrested and the islands were left to become part of the North Solomons Province of an independent PNG.
- 5 In 1972 the development of what was to become the world’s largest copper mine, Panguna, started. Women pulled out surveying pegs and lay down in front of trucks in an attempt to stop mining but were forcibly removed.
- 6 The mine provided a great source of income to the cash-strapped PNG Government, accounting for 40 per cent of their national export earnings. The landowners received less than one per cent of the profits while their rivers became horrendously polluted and surrounding trees and plants died.
- 7 Tensions between traditional landowners on the one hand, and the PNG Government and the mining company on the other hand, heightened as a group of landowners got together and campaigned for more compensation and better environmental control. They resorted to violence, naming themselves the Bougainville Revolutionary Army.
- 8 The PNGDF arrived in 1989, burned villages and also tortured, killed and raped civilians and rebels. The BRA expanded operations through the whole island and declared independence on 17 May 1990. The PNGDF announced a blockade of the island the next day.

trust these people and I don't trust the women.'

'You live with a woman!' says Theresa in exasperation as she turns half her back to him and leans closer to me: 'Don't listen to all of this. He has been a bridge between warring parties.'

Ben is shaking his head: 'I might be a bridge, but soon I will break. Too many people on me and I break.'

'There is not peace,' he continues, 'We signed the declarations but there is not trust. I do not trust the PNGDF. I have peace with Resistance because they are Bougainvilleans, black skins like me. Not these redskins (Papuan). I want them to go back.'

'You can't ask them to go back. They don't want to be here,' insists Theresa. 'It's the Government that wants them to be here. That is who you must

talk to.'

Ben is not pacified: 'I do not trust the Government,' he says and then adds thoughtfully: 'There have been four cease-fires, maybe there will be a fifth one.'

'No!' says Theresa her yellow eyes flashing anger.

Ben crosses his arms: 'I am not ashamed of it. I have ras-

cals watching and ready to fight. I want to tell the world!'

Theresa covers her ears and, head down, shouts: 'Stop talking like this. I don't want to hear it. I don't want to know!'

Ben continues: 'We have our weapons and they have theirs. We are ready to fight.'

Theresa turns and looks him straight in the eyes as she emphasizes each word: 'You own the peace. You signed the agreement. You can not fight. You own the peace.'

Ben is silent for a moment. The words hang somewhere in the space between the two political adversaries. And the realization comes - they agree on something after all. Ben's shoulders push back and he grins proudly: 'I own the peace.'

Enemies who became friends - Theresa Jaintong and Ben Kamada.

INTERNATIONAL

Commitment 2000 for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence (Sign the statement and undertake to contribute to a culture of non-violence),

Appeal of the Nobel Peace Prize Laureates for the Children of the World, BP 20797-60207, Compiègne Cedex 2, France.

Fax: +33 3 44 86 39 07.

e-mail: nobel.appeal.2000@wanadoo.fr

Peace Brigades International (civilian human-rights monitors), 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, England.

Tel: +44 171 713 0392.

Fax: +44 171 837 2290.

e-mail: pbiio@gn.apc.org

WILPF International Office Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1 rue Varembe, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

Tel: +41 227 33 6175.

Fax: +41 227 40 1063.

e-mail: womensleague@gn.apc.org

INCORE (Initiative on Conflict Resolution and Ethnicity, Academic research and information resource centre), Aberfoyle House, Northland Road, Derry BT48 7JA, Northern Ireland.

Tel: +44 1504 375 600.

Fax: +44 1504 375 510.

e-mail: incore@incore.ulst.ac.uk

Website:

www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/about/index.html

International Alert 1 Glyn Street, London SE11 5HT, England.

Tel: +44 171 793 8383.

Fax: +44 171 793 7975.

AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

NZ Foundation for Peace Studies PO Box 4110, Auckland.

Tel: +64 9 373 2379. Fax: +64 9 379 2668.

e-mail: peace@fps.ak.planet.co.nz

Disarmament and Security Centre PO Box 8390, Christchurch.

Tel/Fax: +64 3 348 1353.

e-mail: kate@chch.planet.org.nz

NZ Nuclear Free Peacemaking

Association PO Box 8541, Christchurch.

Tel: +64 3 329 6778.

Network Waitangi Community House,

187 Cashel Street, Christchurch.

Tel: +64 3 365 5266.

Fax: +64 3 366 8535.

OWN THE PEACE

Create peace in your own community and country and support peace processes in the Majority World. Contact the following organizations:

AUSTRALIA

Australian Nonviolence Network

PO Box 69, Brunswick, Victoria 3056.

Australians for Reconciliation

6 Horton St, Marrickville, NSW 2601.

Tel: 1800 060 266

Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace 383 Albert Street, East Melbourne, Victoria 3002.

Tel: +61 3 9926 571. Fax: +61 3 9926 5709.

Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation

3-5 National Circuit, Barton, ACT 2600.

Tel: 1800 807 071.

e-mail: car@dpmc.gov.au

International Women's Development

Agency (including projects in Bougainville), 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, Victoria 3000.

Tel: +61 3 9650 5574.

Fax: +61 3 9654 9877.

e-mail: iwda@sub.net.au

BOUGAINVILLE

Foundation for Community

Development in Bougainville PO Box 338, Buka, Bougainville/North Solomons Province, Papua New Guinea.

Tel: +675 983 9789.

Leitana Nehan Women's

Development Agency PO Box 86, Buka, Bougainville/North Solomons Province, Papua New Guinea.

Tel/Fax: +675 983 9962.

BRITAIN

Campaign Against the Arms Trade

11 Goodwin Street, Finsbury Park, London N4 3HQ.

Tel: +44 171 281 0297.

Fax: +44 171 281 4369.

e-mail: enquiries@caat.demon.co.uk

Website: www.gn.apc.org/caat

National Peace Council (including *Abolition 2000*, a campaign to work for elimination of nuclear weapons by 2000), 88 Islington High Street, London N1 8EG.

Tel: +44 171 354 5200.

Fax: +44 171 354 0033.

e-mail: npc@gn.apc.org

Website: www.wagingpeace.org/

Peace Pledge Union 41B Brecknock

Road, London N7 0BT.

Tel: +44 171 424 9444.

Fax: +44 171 482 6390.

e-mail: peacenow@gn.apc.org

Website: www.gn.apc.org/peacepledge/

Saferworld (campaigns against the trade in small arms), 3rd Floor, 33/34 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7DP.

Tel: +44 171 580 8886.

Fax: +44 171 631 1444.

e-mail: sworld@gn.apc.org

Website: www.gn.apc.org/sworld

CANADA

End the Arms Race 405-825 Granville St, Vancouver BC V6Z 1K9.

Tel: +1 604 687 3223.

email: Info@peacewire.org

Option Paix (Quebec-based peace magazine) Mouvement Option Paix, PO Box 1037, SUCCB, Hull, Quebec J8X 3X5.

Tel: +1 819 684 1641.

e-mail: Bonmarc@infonet.ca

Project Ploughshares (Canada's national peace coalition) Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G6.

Tel: +1 519 888 6541. Fax: +1 519 885 0806.

e-mail: Plough@Ploughshares.ca

Website: www.Ploughshares.ca

Science for Peace H02 University College, 15 King's College Circle, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 1A1.

Tel/Fax: +1 416 978 3606.

e-mail: sfp@physics.utoronto.ca

Website: www.math.yorku.ca/sfp/

NORTHERN IRELAND

Cost of the Troubles Study Unit 14, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast BT14 2GG.

Tel/Fax: +44 1232 742 682

e-mail: MBE.Smyth@ulst.ac.uk

Families Against Intimidation and Terror Washington House, 14-16 High Street, Belfast BT1 2BD.

Tel: +44 1232 237 397.

Fax: +44 1 232 314 155.

e-mail: info@fait.org Website: www.fait.org/

Northern Ireland Council for

Integrated Education 10 Upper

Crescent, Belfast BT7 INT.

Tel: +44 1232 236 200.

Fax: +44 1232 236 237.

e-mail: development@nicie.org.uk

Website: www.nicie.org.uk

Peace People 224 Lisburn Road, Belfast

BT9 6GE, Northern Ireland.

Tel: +44 1232 663 465.

Fax: +44 1232 683 947.

e-mail: peacepeople@gn.apc.org

Website:

www.globalgateway.com/peacepeople

Peace and Reconciliation Group 18-20

Bishop Street, Derry BT48 6PW.

Tel: +44 1504 369 206.

Fax: +44 1504 377 009.

e-mail: PeacePRG@aol.com

Victims and Survivors Trust 275-277

Falls Road, Belfast BT12 6FD.

Tel: +44 1802 567 332.

Fax: +44 1232 202 031.

e-mail: vast@iol.ie

Website: www.ireland.iol.ie/~vast

The Pat Finucane Centre 1 West End

Park, Derry BT48 9JF.

Tel: +44 1504 268846.

Fax: +44 1504 266453.

e-mail: pfc@www.serve.com

Website: www.serve.com/pfc/

UNITED STATES

Center for Nonviolent Communication

(training and tips on how to handle conflict),

PO Box 2662, Sherman, Texas 75091.

Tel: +1 903 893 3886.

Fax: +1 903 893 2935.

Peace Action International Office

866 UN Plaza, Room 4053, New York, NY 10017 1822.

Tel: +1 212 750 5795.

Fax: +1 212 750 5849.

e-mail: paintl@igc.apc.org

Website: www.webcom.com/peaceact

PeaceJam Foundation 2427 West

Argyle Place, Denver, CO 80211.

Tel: +1 303 455 2099.

e-mail: peacejam@aol.com

Website: www.peacejam.org

Women Against Military Madness

310 E. 38th St, No 225, Minneapolis,

MN 55408.

Tel: +1 612 827 5364.

Fax: +1 612 827 6433.

'UNTIL I became involved with the indigenous movement I was living in a dream,' recalls Zenilda da Silva Vilacio. 'I was just sleepwalking.'

We're sitting in Zenilda's tumbledown house chatting about the indigenous rights movement in Brazil and her own personal history. At first there's an edge of weariness in her words. But that gradually fades as she warms to the subject. She paints a vivid picture of the hardships she has endured, both as an Indian and a woman. Yet her round, unlined face shows few traces of the strain.

At the age of six she was sent to work as a maid in Manaus, the sprawling frontier city in the heart of the Amazon. Zenilda's parents hoped that she would get a better education there, but her work left little spare time or money for schooling.

It was the first time that she had been away from her village of Ponta Alegre. She didn't even know she was an Indian. Although both her parents spoke the Sateré-Mawé language, it was not passed on to Zenilda or her siblings. 'In those days being an Indian was something that you kept quiet,' she says bitterly. 'It was synonymous with being a savage. You were stupid, lazy and good for nothing. But though we were obliged to remain silent we never lost our identity.'

More than 30 years later, prejudice against native people has not disappeared in Brazil. But Indians are more conscious of their heritage and more vocal in their demands for respect and justice.

After she had been in Manaus a few years her father died and Zenilda returned to her family's village. Slowly her eyes opened and she started to understand how her people were being mistreated.

'I saw how tough my mother's life was and I saw people going hungry. Indian land and Indian labour were being exploited and in return my people got poorer and more hungry. My father was a woodcutter. He cut down wood every day but every night he slept on the ground. When he died he didn't even have a coffin. The white man he cut wood for was rich, but he didn't help our family. My sisters and I were poor and illiterate while the sons of the "boss" were rich and educated.'

Lured by the prospect of better work, her whole family decided to move to Manaus. A few years later, at age 15, Zenilda was forced to marry a non-Indian since he appeared to be 'a good provider'.

Though they had three children together the relationship soon soured. Her husband began to mock and denigrate her Indian roots.

'He started to talk about how Indians were only good for working in the jungle, that they were no good in the city. I didn't yet know what it meant to be an Indian, that Indians had any value.'

When Zenilda got involved in the indigenous movement in the 1980s, the marriage broke down completely. 'That's when I learned that Indians had rights and that there was a law to protect me.'

It was a revelation. And it was empowering. 'I threw my hus-

Zenilda da Silva Vilacio

Janet Smith visits a determined indigenous woman fighting for the rights of women and of her people in the Brazilian Amazon.

band out and kept my children.' Later on all three children would proudly assume their Indian identity.

Zenilda joined the AMARN (Association of Indigenous Women from the Upper Rio Negro) and worked with them for a year. 'It was difficult for me because I didn't speak their language. Then one day my colleagues in the movement said that I should leave AMARN and organize women in my own tribe, the Sateré-Mawé.' (In 1991, Brazil's National Indian Foundation estimated that there were 5,825 Sateré-Mawé living on their traditional lands between the Madeira and Tapajós rivers east of Manaus.)

In spite of her inexperience Zenilda was enthusiastic. In 1993 the first meeting of the Association of Indigenous Women of Sateré-Mawé (AMISM) was held in Zenilda's house. The following year two assemblies were organized during which

AMISM's statute was approved and candidates elected to administrative positions; in 1995 it was officially registered as a non-profit organization.

AMISM's aims are to fight for the rights of the Sateré-Mawé, especially the women, to improve their health and education and to promote economic self-sufficiency. But the course of the organization's development has not been smooth.

Cash has always been in short supply and at a personal level Zenilda has had to confront the sexist attitudes of some of her male colleagues, both Indian and non-Indian.

'They think that women talk rubbish,' she snorts. 'They claim we're only good in the kitchen and in bed. My first time in Brasilia (the country's capital) the men didn't even shake my hand or say "Good-day". One day an Indian man said to my face: "Indigenous women are incompetent, you shouldn't exist in the movement." We women are under a lot of pressure. We need courage, real courage, and strength.'

Zenilda's courage is beginning to pay off both in recognition and respect. During the Sixth General Assembly of COIAB (Co-ordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon) in May 1998, she and her fellow female delegates insisted indigenous women's concerns be discussed. They called for a special section to be created to develop women's projects.

Now she is also eager to build a pan-Amazon women's organization.

'We have met with AMARN to establish a political movement of indigenous women. We desperately need to defend our rights at the national level, too.'

It will be a challenge and Zenilda is determined to take it on. She is clearly a force to be reckoned with.

'It has been a real fight,' she says. Then she pauses for a moment and smiles quickly before correcting herself. 'It *is* a real fight.' ■

Janet Smith is a student of Latin American studies at the University of Essex in England. She spent three years working as a nurse and midwife in the Amazon.

JANET SMITH

Reviews



books

Biopiracy: The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge

by **Vandana Shiva**
(Green Books/Gaia Foundation,
ISBN 1-870098-74-9)

White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society

by **Ghassan Hage**
(Pluto Press – Australia, Comerford & Miller
– UK, ISBN 1 871204 15 1)

Few in the West truly have the gift to stand outside the dominant cultural assumptions about science, economics, nature and technology. Fortunately, we can read Vandana Shiva.

Her latest book **Biopiracy: The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge** is a critique of the colonization of life itself by transnational corporations through genetic engineering, patents and intellectual property rights.

Biotechnology, Shiva argues, is the product of a Eurocentric and reductionist world view which regards nature and indigenous knowledge of local ecosystems as 'empty' resources to be enclosed and exploited for Western capital, much as the 'New World' was regarded as empty land by the colonists. 'The duty to incorporate savages into Christianity has been replaced by the duty to incorporate non-Western systems of knowledge into the reductionism

of commercialized Western science and technology,' she writes. For example, while traditional knowledge may increase the efficiency of pinpointing plants' medicinal uses by more than 400 per cent, the system of Intellectual Property Rights only recognizes the 'ownership' of this knowledge by transnational corporations.

For Shiva biopiracy is fuelled by the monocultural logic of free trade and globalization, which are the latest manifestation of the colonial mindset. Monoculture, in agriculture as in society, leads to breakdown and fundamentally threatens sustainability.

In a world in which the US Commerce Secretary 'owns' the cell lines of the Hagahai of Papua New Guinea, and seeds themselves no longer regenerate life, this book moves the biotech debate deep into fundamentals. Shiva may not be the liveliest writer, but her analytic strength and perceptiveness make her essential reading.

Politics ★★★★★
Entertainment ★★☆☆

KA

Although quite different in approach, Ghassan Hage's book also takes to task white arrogance. Pakistanis in the British midlands, North Africans in urban France, Indo-Chinese in suburban Australia: all have

felt the sting of betrayal that comes by living in what might officially be a 'multicultural' nation.

White Nation: fantasies of white supremacy in a multicultural society is a journey through the lived, rather than the official, realities of Western multiculturalism. An anthropologist, Hage dismantles that peculiar feature of dominant white groups that so generously 'allow' others

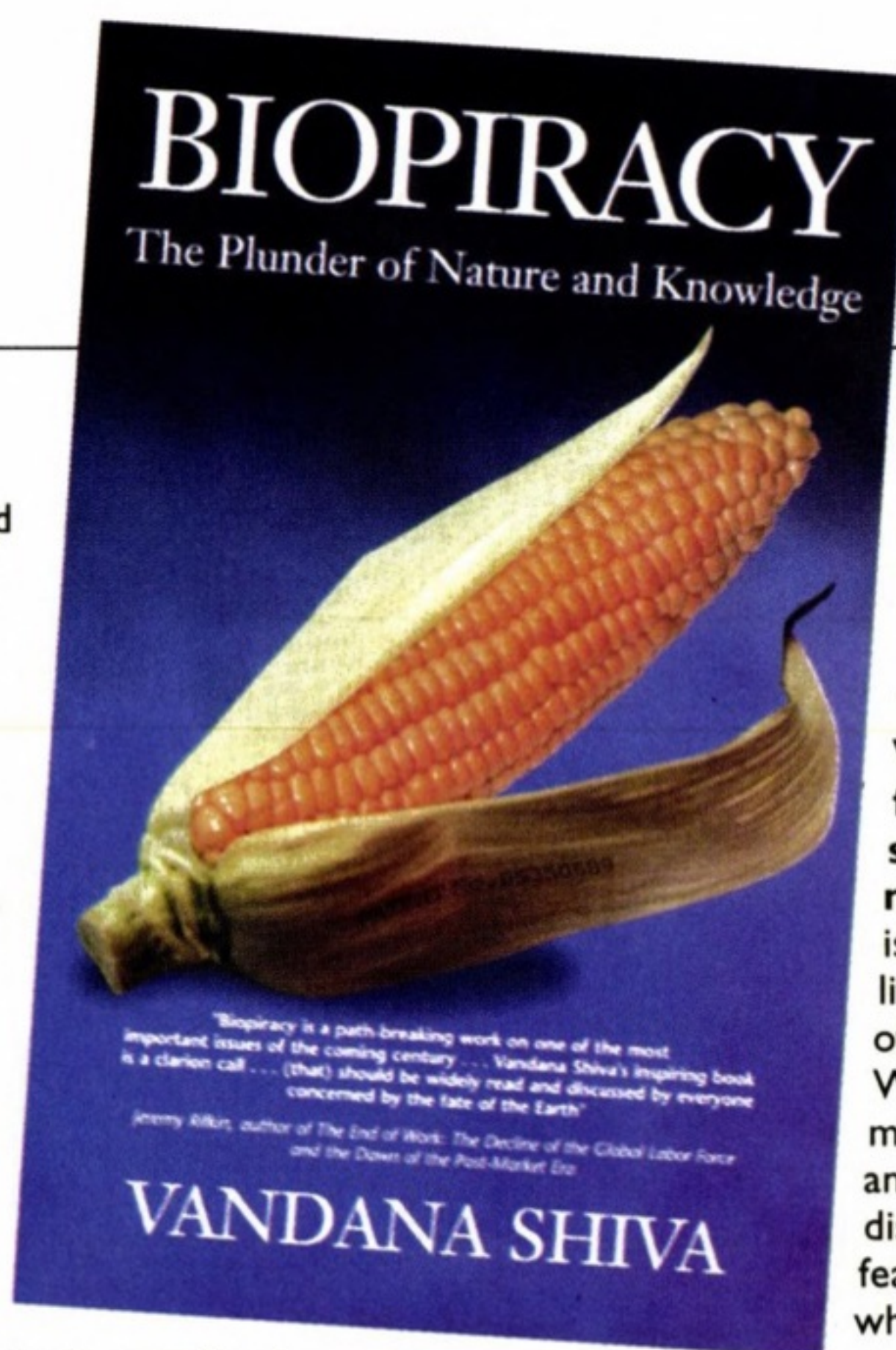
to co-exist with them.

His main target is the self-congratulatory smugness of the white middle-class, inner-city dwelling liberals who see migrants as little more than a range of interesting cuisine. Hage introduces some helpful terms, such as 'ethnic caging' and 'national will', and teases out the discourses of 'enrichment' as well as the colonial art of collecting 'otherness'. He believes whiteness has more to do with state of mind than with race. Thus migrants can 'accumulate' whiteness.

The energy in this book shows that Hage remains positive. The reactionary 'worriers' who express endless concern about migrant levels or origins, says Hage, represent merely the 'last resort of the weak'. There is the usual call for radical change – in particular to de-whiten the police, courts and media. What is less usual is the tone of the work: uncompromisingly passionate and full of hope.

Politics ★★★★★
Entertainment ★★★★★

GF



film

Life on earth

directed by **Abderrahmane Sissako**
(Celluloid Dreams, Paris. Oasis Films, Canada.)

Life on Earth forms part of an impressive international series assembled in France 'to depict, in fiction, the moment of transition to the year 2000'. Abderrahmane Sissako, who had studied film in the Soviet Union and in France, decided that for this project he must return to his hometown of Sokolo in rural Mali.

The film that he has created thus imagines life in Sokolo during the last hours of the century and on into the following New-Year's Day. In Sokolo there are no celebrations, no grand schemes, no Y2K (or 'millennium bug') panics, no grandiose summations of national

destiny. For an outside viewer it's hard to see how life is affected at all by the turn of the calendar. Some people try to negotiate long-distance phone calls, others visit the tailor's shop or dress up a little to get their portraits taken. A large delegation of perhaps 20 men walk through the village, on their way to a meeting or gathering. A speedy motorbike zips noisily into town stirring a cloud of red dust. But that's about it.

Sokolo represents a social and cultural milieu completely different from that of Europe. In many ways it follows the ancient, worldwide traditions of agricultural living, where anxieties centre on livestock,



Rabelais and his world

...being the book that links us to sixteenth-century pop culture.

weather and natural pests. The blazing sun and the constant battle with huge flocks of grain-eating birds form the biggest preoccupations.

Yet rural Mali is not oblivious to the larger world. Letters from abroad and the local radio provide steady reminders of life elsewhere, especially in Paris. As a young woman in traditional dress strides along an unpaved Sokolo street kicking up the red dust, we hear an enthusiastic radio announcer tell of the big snowfall in Paris and the growing excitement among the 'millennium' crowds gathering in Tokyo.

This push and pull between a big world and a small one permeates the film and meshes with Sissako's focus on local communications. Sokolo is held together by the cultural glue of local radio, the post office and its telephone service, a common knowledge of important books, even the village photographer with his display of mini portraits. Communicating can be difficult, however. By first-world standards the phone system is decidedly crude. The phone is a public instrument only, operated by post office workers in the manner of the old telegraph service. 'Reaching people is a question of luck,' warns the operator.

Life on Earth presents rural Africa as somewhat idyllic, where the culture is open and relaxed, the community stable and people are friendly. But the film also carries a political edge and a few pointed reminders that poverty and international exploitation lurk nearby. The neo-colonial relationship is well-known, certainly by the radio disk-jockey who urges villagers to hear the words of an author 'that we know well'. That author is Aimé Césaire, the poet and essayist of Martinique, whose books have helped three generations of Africans understand the legacies of colonialism. 'Life is not a spectacle,' wrote Césaire. 'A screaming man is not a dancing bear.'

Through his patient, loving camera and his tough intellect, based on Césaire, Sissako has created a beautiful, fully controlled work of art. A work that celebrates life yet also reminds us that even with the turn of the century, in rural Mali 'no improvements can be expected soon'.

Politics ★★★★★

Entertainment ★★★★★

PS

STAR RATING

Excellent ★★★★★
Very good ★★★★★
Good ★★★★★
Fair ★★★★★
Poor ★★★★★

Medieval and early-modern commoners did not leave a great deal of literary material behind them. With rare exceptions they did not leave diaries or sheets of biography tucked discreetly under the floorboards; few scattered testaments of their lives were slipped conveniently inside the family bible, ready for later generations to discover and marvel at.

Most of the surviving written sources which do touch upon the lives of the peasantry and the artisans were written by members of other social classes who reduce the commoners to thin stereotypes: the peasant as victim or as threat, the craftsman as loyal or disloyal, and so on. Such commoners-by-proxy are made to appear and perform, but they leave the reader in no doubt that someone else is pulling the strings.

This is why Rabelais's *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel* remain such a crucial and enigmatic link to the popular past. Writing in the early 1500s, before the establishment of the modern literary canon, he provided a rare and deeply confusing glimpse into the world of the urban commoner; a world of hardships and raucous celebrations, of oaths, obscenities and billingsgate; a world centred upon the marketplace bursting forth in collective popular licence as a counter-balance to the privations of Lent.

This is also a deeply confusing world. Rabelais is notorious for long lists of just about anything. Some of them seem to make a remote kind of sense (lists of mostly invented books), while others simply seem odd (lists of fish). Then there is the surreal imagery: the overgrown *Pantagruel*, for example, is born out of his mother's left ear, and he later drowns 260,418 Parisians ('not counting women and children') by urinating in their general direction. Exaggeration and the fantastic combine with wildly alternating praise and abuse, which could easily convince the reader that here is a book which has little to do with the real world at any point in history, or, more generously, that it just has too much to do with the world of Rabelais's time, and too little to do with our own world.

My own first attempt to make some sort of sense of Rabelais – way back in the mists of time – failed miserably, but then I didn't have Mikhail Bakhtin to guide me through the joyful morass. Bakhtin's study steers the reader through Rabelais without resorting to a blow-by-thud account of the text. Instead he focuses upon key themes such as the significance of bawdy and body, the language of the marketplace, the relation between carnivalesque licence and the popular worldview.

Bakhtin points to an opposition between the unofficial popular culture and the official,

serious, self-important culture of the later Middle Ages and early modern period. The official culture had a structured picture of the world which was static, regimented and hierarchical. Its idealized ordering was vertical: heaven, earth and hell sat on top of one another, each with their own circles and levels. The universe was earthly class-regimentation writ large, writ eternally, writ pompously.

Unofficial culture brought its official counterpart down to earth by degrading it. All that was holiest of holy and altogether high falutin' was turned to food and excrement. The fundamental ordering of the world was on the horizontal plane of time, of change, of death-birth renewal.

When Bakhtin was first translated into English in the late 1960s, the idea of Carnival took off with a vengeance. But since then a reaction has set in and his fluid idea of official and unofficial cultures has been misconstrued as a static division into cultures sealed off from one another. This reflects neither early-modern realities nor Bakhtin's actual account of them: he relies upon the interplay of official and unofficial cultures, each relying upon the other

for its own sense of meaning. Carnival brings together all of these contradictions of popular culture, showing the chaotic, unfinished nature of the world; it embraces conflict and it embraces change.

The differences between this, and the 'social realism' which dominated Russian official thought at the time Bakhtin was writing could not have been greater. Setting the culture of the realistic workers against that of their degenerate modernist rulers, social realists presented a picture of the working class which was strong, virile, heroic, no-nonsense, looking-towards-the-future, uniform, in-uniform, dull and unimaginative.

Bakhtin's view of popular culture in the early 1500s was anything but a projection of this stereotype onto the past. If anything it was a point-by-point rejection of such dogmas. Popular culture, in Bakhtin's view, was ambivalent not prefigurative. As for any crude conception of heroic realism, it is difficult to be heroic when everything elevated and self-important is brought down to earth, debased, turned to *merde*. Understandably he ran into problems when the book was submitted to the authorities in 1940.

Warts and all, this is a truly great book, not a particularly light read, but one that has stood the test of time.

Tony Milligan

Mikhail Bakhtin's *Rabelais and his World* is published by Indiana University Press, 1984 (ISBN 0-253-20341-4).



Reviews



music

Manifiesto

by Victor Jara

(Castle Music ESMCD 6657 CD)

Redneck Wonderland

by Midnight Oil

(Sony/Columbia CD)

Victor Jara was not, unlike thousands of other Chileans, one of General Pinochet's 'disappeared'. Indeed, Jara's body — once the dictator's secret police had finished with him — actually turned up, dumped outside Santiago's Metropolitan Cemetery. He had been killed a few days after the assassination of President Allende by the Pinochet-led junta; Jara's 'crime' had been one of visibility.

The son of peasants from southern Chile, Jara was a multi-talented man who had worked in theatre before fully turning his attentions to songwriting. Taking as his theme an earthy socialism, his career strove to put music at the heart of political change. 'My guitar is a worker/Singing and smelling of spring,' he



sings in 'Manifiesto', written and recorded in 1973, the year of his death. 'It is not for killers.'

Compiled from several recording sessions held between 1968 and 1973, **Manifiesto** is a re-release of an album originally brought out in 1974. Its timing could not have been more felicitous: released to coincide with a concert to raise funds for the Jara Foundation in Chile, the record hit the racks just weeks before Pinochet himself was arrested in Britain.

Jara's songs have aged well. With minimal ornamentation (some percussion here, some panpipes there), his voice conceals in its light tenor a conviction and humanity that is undiminished through time or language. While his songs are very much of their time and place, they are unlike much politically orientated music in their vivacity and emotion. Jara may place an overt faith and optimism in the people, but there is nothing formulaic or hectoring here. Rather, there is an intimacy that characterizes songs for both individuals and crowd. Their potency can be summed up in the fact that, until recently, it was forbidden to mention Jara's name in Chile. That's some legacy.

Politics ☆☆☆☆

Entertainment ☆☆☆☆

LG

Kangaroos are a much-loved national symbol of Australia. So if you show one holding a shotgun and scribble **Redneck Wonderland** over it, you're being more than a touch provocative. But such is the no-holds-barred approach of Sydney band Midnight Oil. Constrained neither by commercialism nor nervous managers, the Oils take on both Australia's recent resurgence of the loony far-Right, and the greed and inequality that have brought the country so much well-deserved shame.

Strident voices and rough-hewn rock, both in good measure, their call is clear: it's time to take a stand. Once established in the opening title track, this serves as a foundation for the entire album, especially the powerful 'White Skin, Black Heart'.

But it's not a single-issue album. Polluters get a rap ('exhaust fans and smart cards shrink-wrap the coloured air, and send it coughing to eternity'), as does the money-crazed, TV-phased suburbanite ('all is quiet on dripfeed lottery night').

Turn this one up loud enough to shake the walls — it's musical graffiti at its best.

Politics ☆☆☆☆

Entertainment ☆☆☆☆

GF

Reviewers: Louise Gray, Peter Steven, Katherine Ainger, George Fisher

Reviews editor: Vanessa Baird

The NI Crossword

No. 31 by Axe

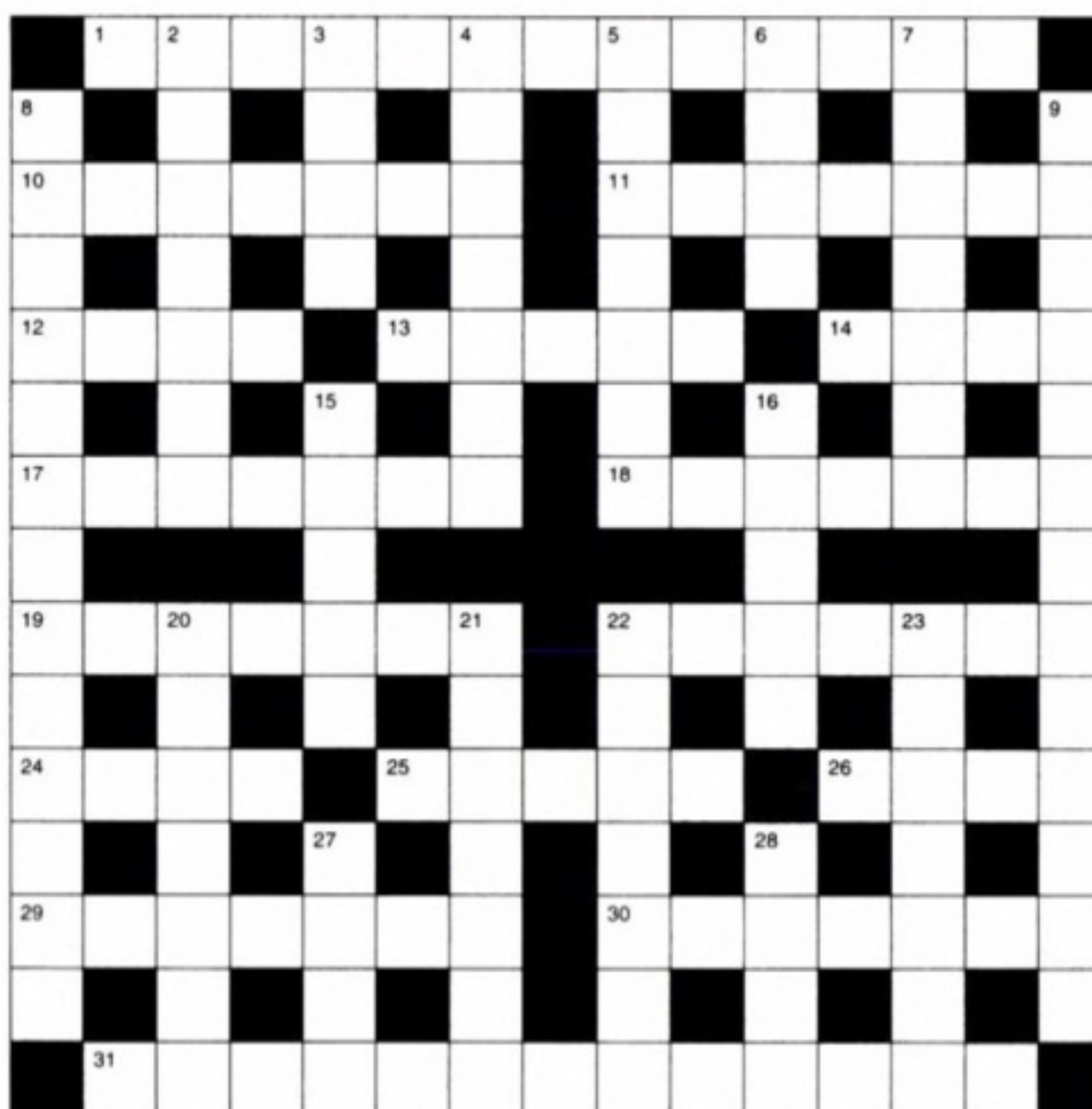
CRYPTIC

Across

- 1 One of the 13,16,25,19, a Canadian who badly represents Laos (6,7)
- 10 A Welshman and a Scotsman meet concerning social reformer's philosophy (7)
- 11 One involved in warp travel struck gold here! (7)
- 12 Fares sound dear (4)
- 13,16,25 Award for beanpole structure at the Church of England fête, we hear (5,5,5)
- 14 Marble dome, perhaps (4)
- 17 Turk initially excessive in greeting Gulf state (7)
- 18 The younger, the more concerned with the environment (7)
- 19 Champions of the 13,16,25? (7)
- 22 Malcolm X — the ghost factor in the downfall of the Scottish king... (7)
- 24 ...mere Scottish play on words! (4)
- 25 See 13
- 26 Newspaper headline (4)
- 29 Nothing on jerk reaction to oil in the Jurassic (7)
- 30 Files again for repairs (7)
- 31 Admiral reaches land, struggling with burst Mae West, leaving one of the 13,16,25,19 (6,7)

Down

- 2 The first woman to support the summit (7)
- 3 Car maker experienced upturn courtesy of unofficial Saudi capital... (4)
- 4 ...and internal effort continued to create capital in Asia (7)
- 5 Displaced Jeb's great at being thrown out of the haven in Denmark (7)
- 6 Powerful Indian slates article supporting the Egyptian deity (4)
- 7 Short ring sound, not long like omega, in Greece? (7)
- 8 Forest argument supported by ex-British PM for one of the 13,16,25,19... (7,6)
- 9 ...one who sees no point in heart-rending threesome arrangements (6,7)
- 15 Mineral water from Yorkshire has no cap (5)
- 16 See 13
- 20 Ballooning punt can upset the Spanish and the French (7)
- 21 Moor after a dash between the two poles (7)
- 22 Zulu's top half appeared in a bottom-orientated line dance (7)
- 23 Loiters about near Lisbon (7)
- 27 Native American is guarding the evacuation of Tennessee (4)
- 28 A pathetic (even without alternative SS involvement!) dictator (4)



QUICK

Across

- 1 Canadian Prime Minister of the 1950s (6,7)
- 10 Describing the philosophy of nineteenth-century father and son social reformers (7)
- 11 Old gold town of Victoria, Australia (7)
- 12 Females of deer (4)
- 13,16,25 It was first awarded in 1901, along with awards in five other categories (5,5,5)
- 14 Span or curve (4)
- 17 Empire whose ambitions were checked by Tamerlane in 1401 (7)
- 18 Fresher, damper (7)
- 19 Point-achieving shots in tennis (7)
- 22 Scottish king killed in battle in 1057 at Lumphanan (7)
- 24 In Scotland, a body of fresh or sea water (4)
- 25 See 13
- 26 A leading attraction, or type of grass (4)
- 29 Limestone beds of the Upper Jurassic period, so called after the roe-type organisms therein (7)
- 30 Spas, for instance (7)
- 31 Elected President of the African National Congress in 1992 (6,7)

Down

- 2 Mountain — Sagarmata or Qomolangma (7)
- 3 Unofficial Saudi summer capital (4)
- 4 Capital of Burma (Myanmar) (7)
- 5 Danish port and ferry terminal (7)
- 6 Indian prince (4)
- 7 15th letter of the Greek alphabet (7)
- 8 US President, a driving force behind the League of Nations in 1920 (7,6)
- 9 Agnes Bojaxhiu of Skopje (1910-97) (6,7)
- 15 Brown earthy mineral used as a pigment (5)
- 16 See 13
- 20 The car of an airship or balloon (7)
- 21 Anti-Christian Muslim of the Middle Ages (7)
- 22 Polish dance (7)
- 23 Lisbon's resort area, to the west of the city (7)
- 27 American natives of Colorado, Nevada and Utah (4)
- 28 Alternative spelling of Middle Eastern Leader's name (4)

Hooting at hunger

There's a festival in Ghana where you can find a spouse, race a bicycle, drink your head out and even end up more optimistic than you began. **Samuel Wiafe** reckons it's worth celebrating.

HOMOWO is an annual festival celebrated among the Ga-speaking people. It originated during a period of great famine which was eventually followed by a bumper harvest of grain and fish. The word *homowo* literally means 'hooting at hunger'. The one I am going to describe is specific to the people of Teshie, near Accra.

The celebrations begin with the light rains in May. During this month the seven principal priests perform the initial rites – the ritual and symbolic sowing of corn. The main festival, however, starts in August with the *Nsho Bulemo* ceremony, which involves the pacification of the sea god. A bull is slaughtered by the chief priest and the carcass is cast into the sea. A few fisherfolk representing the seven principal clans embark on fishing expeditions. If they return with a good catch, that signifies a good Homowo will be possible, but returning empty-handed means the Homowo will have to be suspended or postponed.

This is followed by a ban on drumming, dancing or the burying of corpses. Night clubs and dance halls are closed down and all noisy activities are forbidden for another ceremony known as *Gbemlilaa* ('Closing of the Road'). The idea of the ban is to enable the gods to perform their activities quietly.

After this ceremony the seven clans parade in groups for fortnightly street processions known as *Kpashimo*. These processions enable members of the groups to learn Homowo songs, as well as providing an opportunity for bachelors and spinsters to get a spouse of their choice.

Two weeks later the celebrations start in earnest with the arrival of Ga people who have travelled out of their traditional area and now return in joyous groups to be reunited with their families. They arrive with farm produce like pepper, onions, corn and okra, all of which form the main ingredients of the traditional Homowo food, *Kpokpoi*. This adds a lot of spice to an already exciting town.

At dawn on Tuesday feverish food preparations begin. Soon after midday the head of each household sprinkles the food around all the doorsteps of the Teshie people. The chief and elders also sprinkle at well-noted places where the gods settle – a ritual said to feed the spirits of the departed. Lunch is not served until all these rites and rituals have been observed.

Everyone eats as much as they want, irrespective of their class or social status. On

festive occasions like this all households are open to everyone and all visitors are welcome. Family members who are not able to come home for the meal are sent theirs, wherever they may be, so they can taste and feel the love and unity of their children and parents.

Wednesday is set aside as a remembrance day. On this day people openly weep and others drink their heads out, remembering their lost departed ones. Also, minor and major quarrels and misunderstandings are settled amicably.

Sunday marks the climax of the Homowo street procession.

The seven groups wearing their colourful costumes go through the principal streets singing songs that praise well-behaved members of the community and rebuke the bad ones.

During the period of the festival, parties and sporting activities are held so that talent can be unearthed. In the sporting sphere there are competitions such as boxing, football, table tennis, a regatta and cycling. Other tribes as well as foreigners – especially our brothers and sisters from the diaspora – also take part, reflecting the national and international dimensions of the Homowo.

The following Saturday marks the official end of the festival. On the eve, a vigil is kept for the *Gbé gblemo* ritual which lifts the bans on drumming, dancing and all noisy activities.

At noon the chief priest, dressed in an immaculate white loincloth and patterns made from white clay and red tree-bark, carries the *se se* (a large wooden bowl filled with spiritually purifying water) on the street procession amidst singing, dancing and drumming. The *se se* is presumed to be very healing and powerful, driving off evil spirits. All one needs to do is to put money into the *se se* for the potent water to be sprinkled over you. The procession continues until it reaches the community shrine, where the priest empties the *se se*. People from all walks of life scramble frantically for the money.

The excitement continues to the nearby beach where people joyously swim in the sea. It is believed they have washed their misfortunes, sorrows and calamities of the previous year into the water and can now look to the future with a lot of hope, confidence and aspiration.

Some people may think Homowo is a fetish. But I think it is good that we know and appreciate our culture.

Samuel Wiafe is a student of marketing and an aspiring writer who lives in Teshie.

Defying the odds: scenes from Homowo in Teshie, including the *se se* procession (bottom).



Country profile

Lithuania

OF the three small Baltic states, Lithuania has had the hardest time in its post-Soviet independence. It began well enough. On a wave of people power the nation confronted the riot police and slipped its Soviet bonds in 1990-91, winning the hearts of television viewers around the world and hastening the demise of the USSR. Now, however, the heady enthusiasm of the early 1990s has faded and Lithuania faces more mundane troubles: the business of building democratic institutions and a functioning economic foundation.

The capital Vilnius, with its restored Old Town and cobblestone streets, is clearly enjoying its independence. But few of Lithuania's factory workers and farmers have reaped the rewards of freedom. Geography is in part to blame. Its neighbours to the north, Latvia and Estonia, benefit from Finnish tourists and a robust sea trade. But Lithuania, wedged between Belarus, Russia and Poland, remains vulnerable to cold blasts from the east.

Relations with Moscow, however, are good – perhaps the best among the Baltic states. Lithuania's Russian-speaking minority is so small that it faces few of the troubles that plague Latvia and Estonia over their



treatment of ethnic Russians. But Russia's collapse has hit Lithuania hard: exporters have quickly had to reorient themselves to Western Europe though this, government officials insist, will help the economy in the long run.

Last year Valdas Adamkus, a 72-year-old former US government official, was elected President by a margin of less than half of one per cent. The post may be largely ceremonial, but Lithuanians hoped Adamkus would lead them to the promised land of NATO and the European Union (EU). After his first year, however, the gentleman President

they even scrapped Pushkin from Pushkin Park – but the struggle with the past carries on.

World War Two presents particular problems for Lithuania, as it was invaded by the Soviets, then by the Nazis, and then again by the Red Army. Lithuanian volunteers who fought alongside the Nazis have staged remembrance rallies in Vilnius, and many both at home and abroad accuse them of collaborating in the Holocaust. President Adamkus has set up an international commission of historians to study the period.

A recent law has banned former KGB officers from holding many state posts. The law bears the imprimatur of independence hero Vytautas Landsbergis, now speaker of the Seimas (parliament), who makes no secret of his distaste for all things Communist.

To Landsbergis and many Lithuanians, President Adamkus – who himself fought the Soviets while in his teens – is just the man to bury his homeland's troubled past.

Adamkus, however, knows well what his new compatriots elected him to do: to move Lithuania forward and as far West as possible.

Andrew Meier



concedes that both clubs will take some time to break into. Joining the EU is the country's first goal. 'NATO is the moral shield,' he says. 'But the EU is something we will feel the next day.'

In the meantime, Lithuania's past still haunts its first post-Soviet decade. All the former Soviet lands are polluted with the toxic detritus of the old regime. Lenin busts may be extinct in Vilnius –

AT A GLANCE

Leader: President Valdas Adamkus.

Economy: GNP per capita \$2,280 (Poland \$3,230, Germany \$28,870).

Monetary unit: Litas.

The majority of trade has historically been with Russia and its satellites, though attempts to increase trade with Europe have been bolstered by Russia's economic collapse. A ten-year trade accord with the EU was signed in 1992. Agriculture absorbs 30% of the workforce and industry 40%. Shipbuilding, metalworking and scientific instruments are among the main industries.

People: 3.7 million.

Health: Infant mortality 13 per 1,000 live births (Britain 6 per 1,000).

Culture: Lithuanian 83%, Russian 8%, Polish 7%, Belarusian 2%, Ukrainian 1%; with Jewish, German, Latvian and Tatar minorities.

Religion: Christian – 80% Catholic.



Language: Lithuanian became the official language in 1995.

Sources The World Guide 1999/2000, The State of the World's Children 1999; The Europe Review 1997.

Never previously profiled.

NI star rating

EXCELLENT	★★★★★
GOOD	★★★★
FAIR	★★★
POOR	★★
APPALLING	★

STAR RATINGS



INCOME DISTRIBUTION ★★★
Vilnius is being rebuilt – with hard currency. But by no means all have reaped the economic benefits of post-Soviet liberation.



LITERACY ★★★★★
99%. One thing, perhaps, for which the Lithuanians can thank the Soviet Union.



SELF-RELIANCE ★★★
Hard as it may try to escape, the tiny nation remains deep in Russia's long shadow.



FREEDOM ★★★★★
The roots of democratic reform have taken hold and individual rights are guaranteed.



POSITION OF WOMEN ★★★★★
Professionals and workers are nearly equal in gender terms.



LIFE EXPECTANCY ★★★★★
70 years (Russia 65). Lithuania follows Soviet tradition by providing for the retired – unlike Russia.

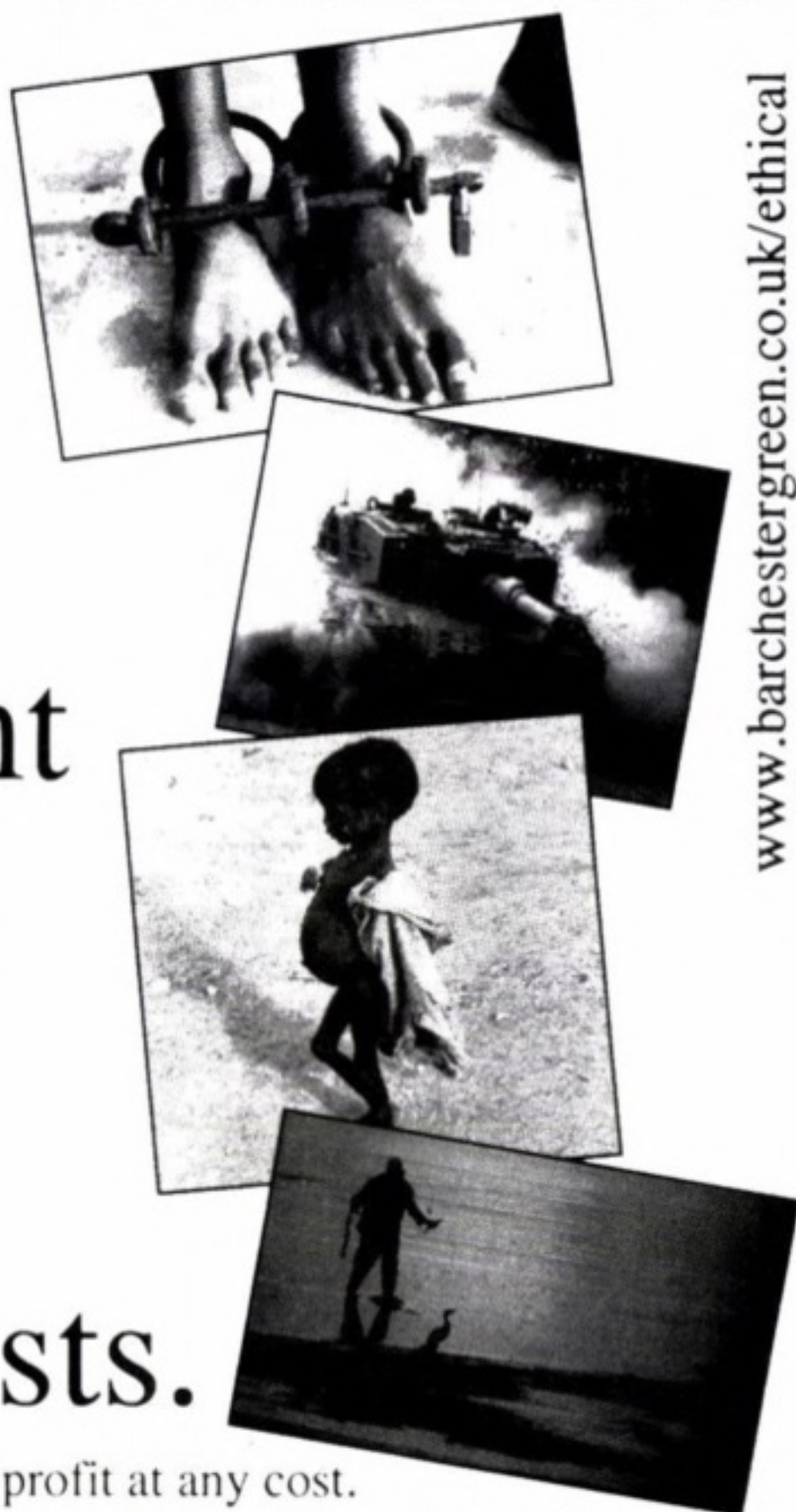
POLITICS



NI ASSESSMENT ★★★

They are trying – hard. Those left out of the privatization process and the rush to European markets are certainly hurting, however. While the state is trying to support those at society's margins, the recent economic crash in Russia is making their job much more difficult.

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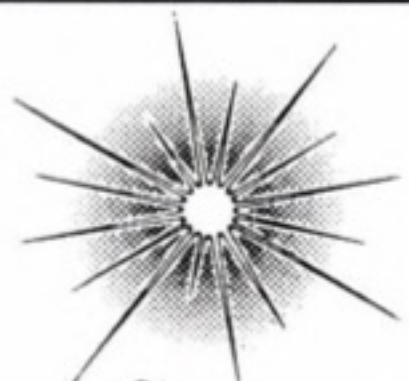
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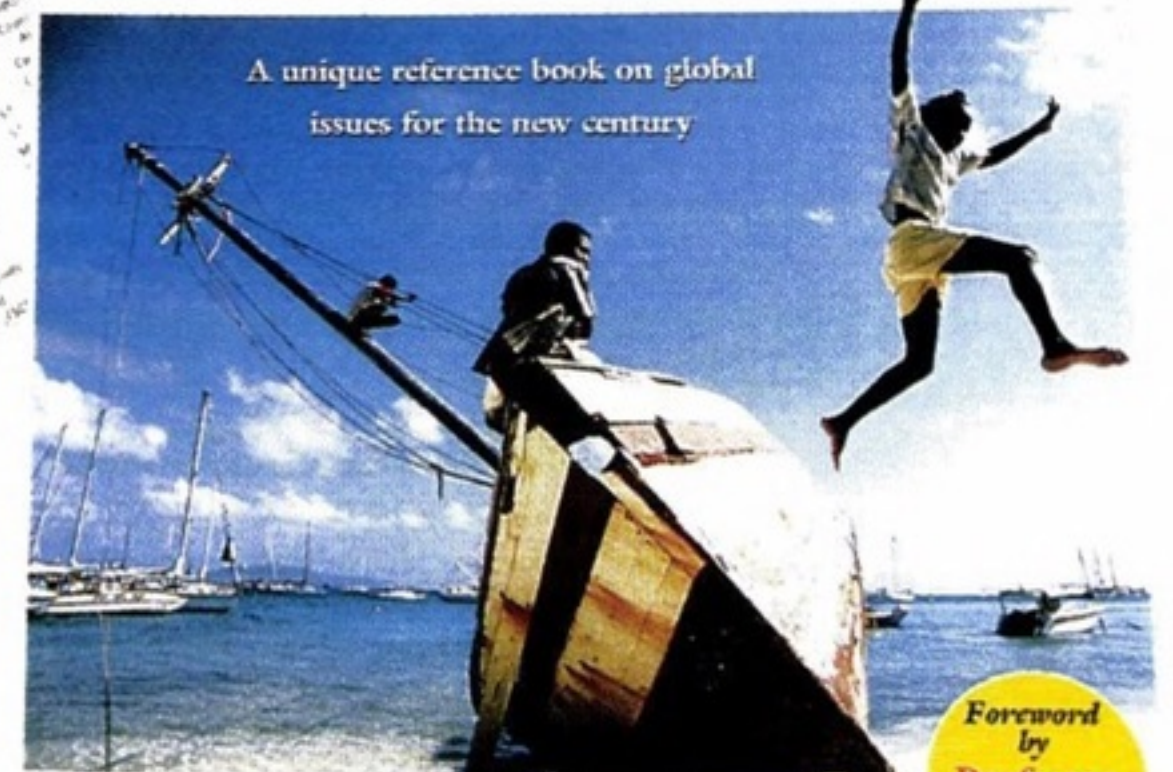
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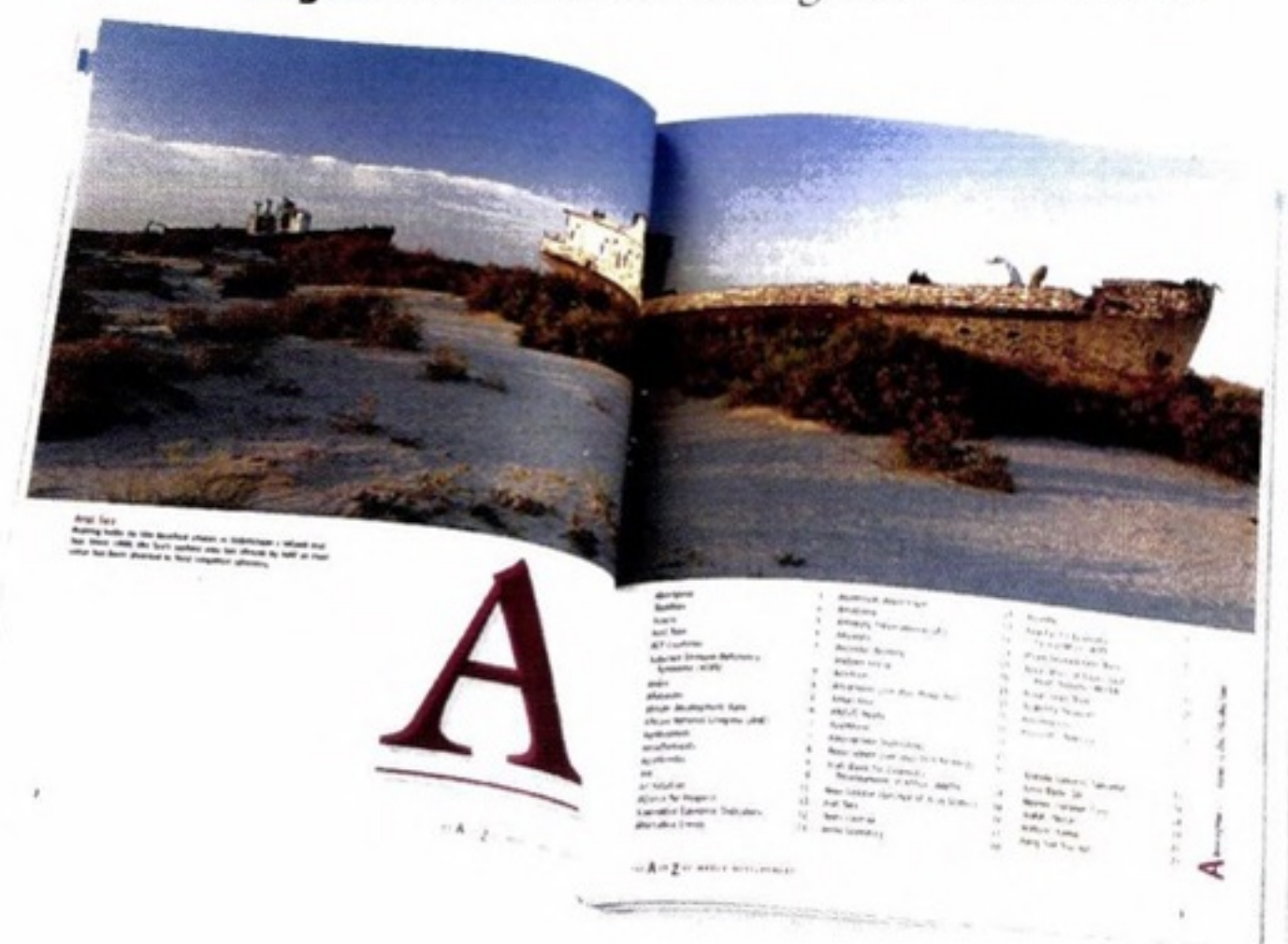
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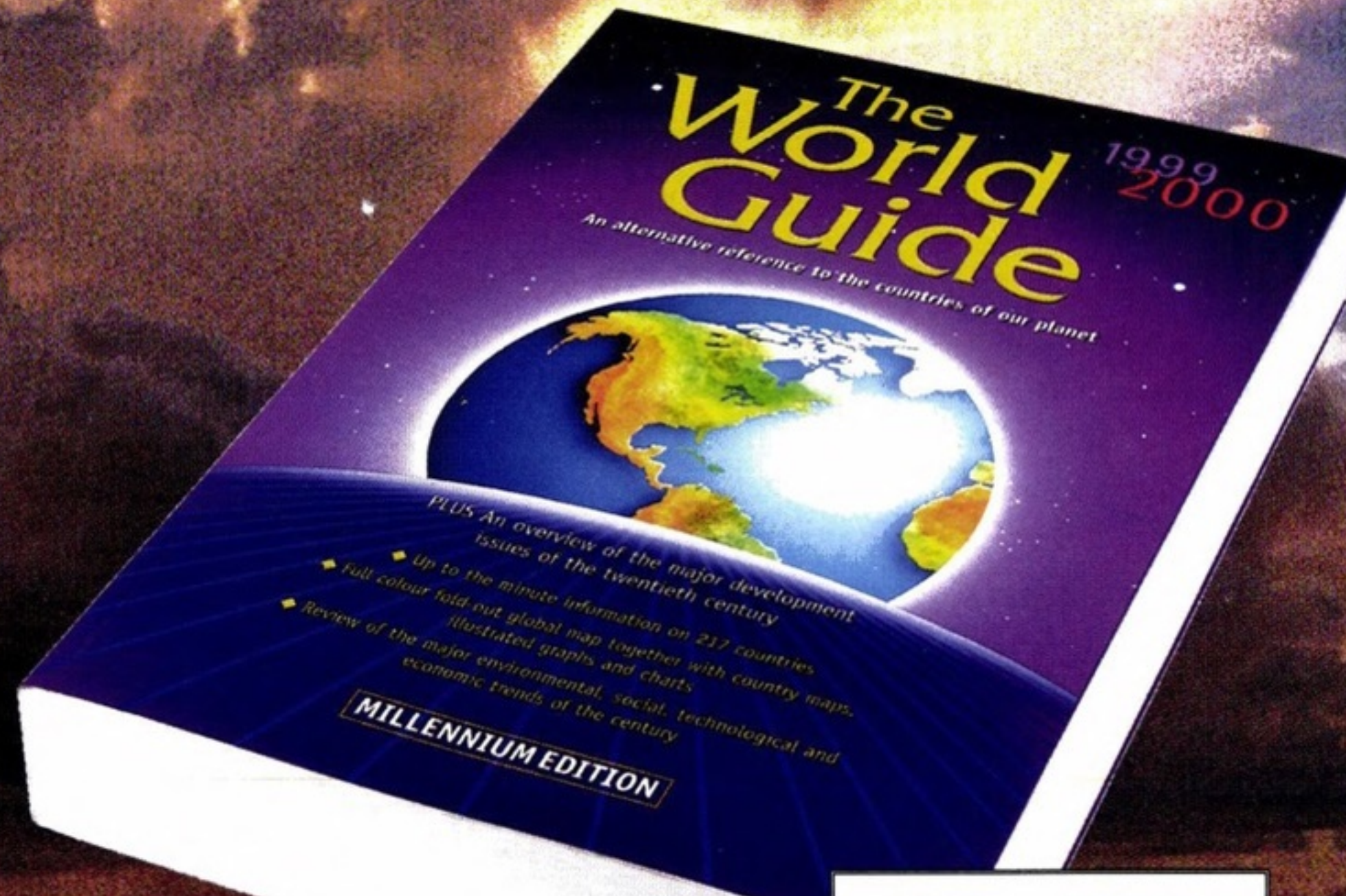
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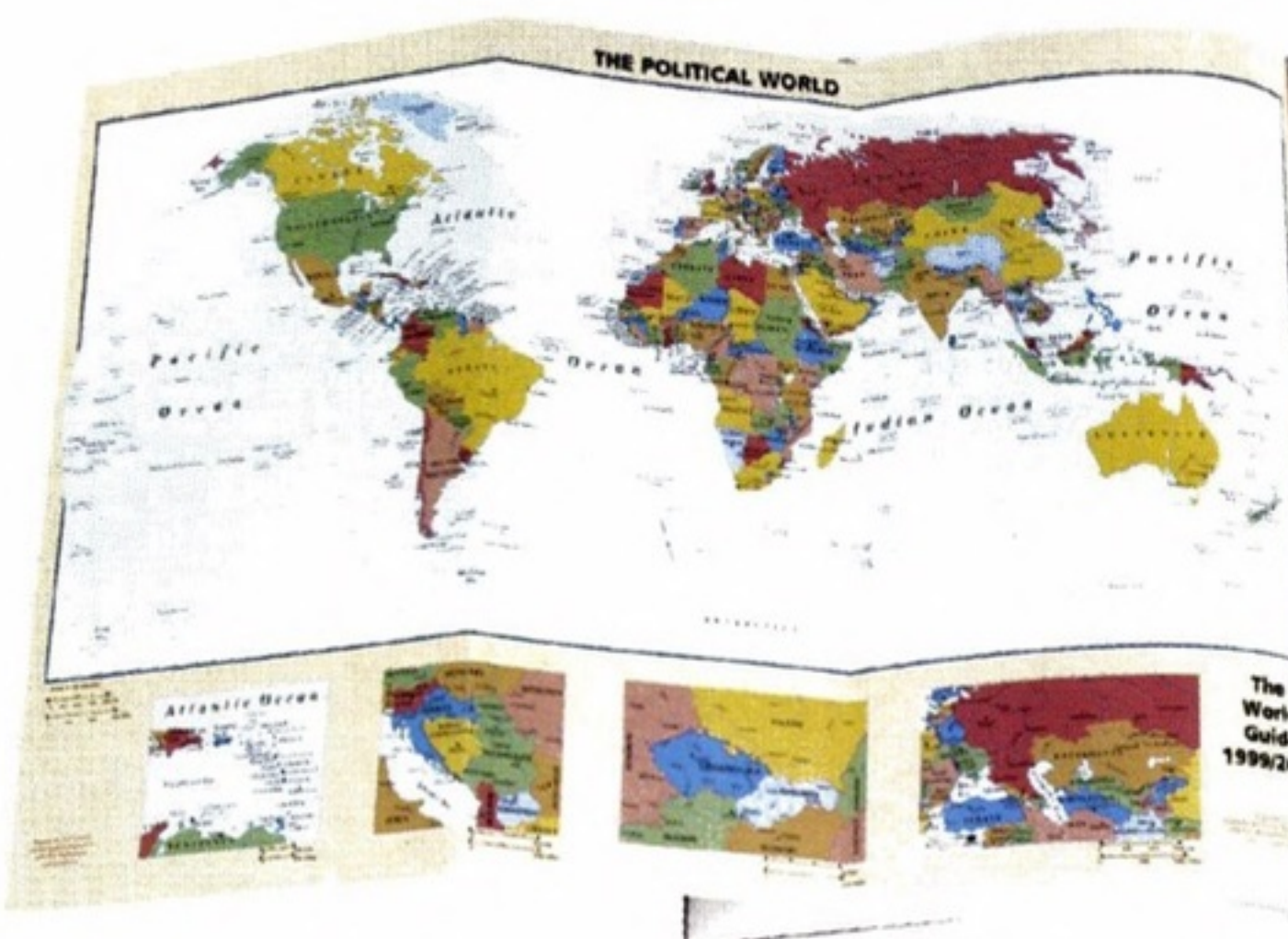
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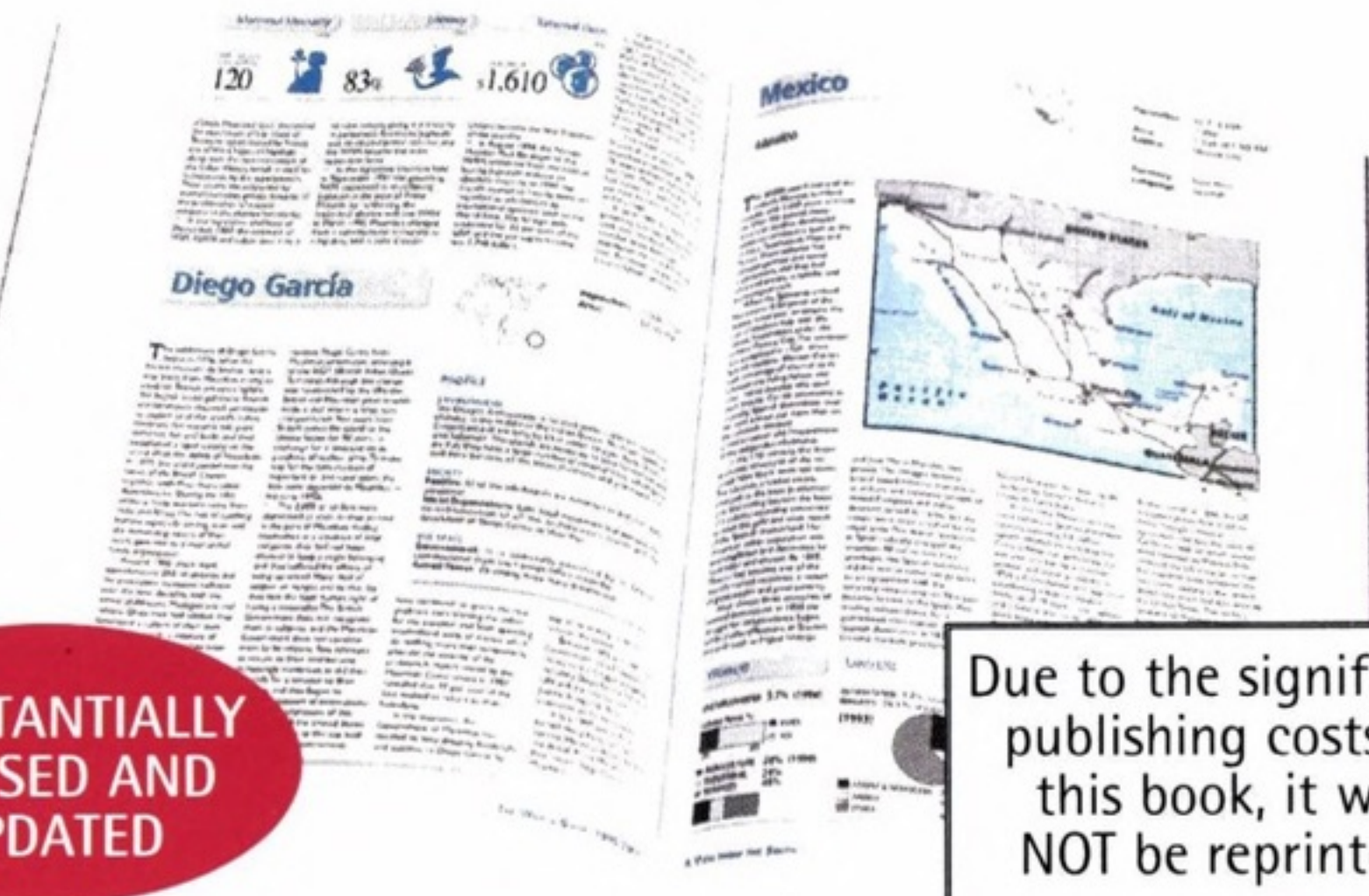
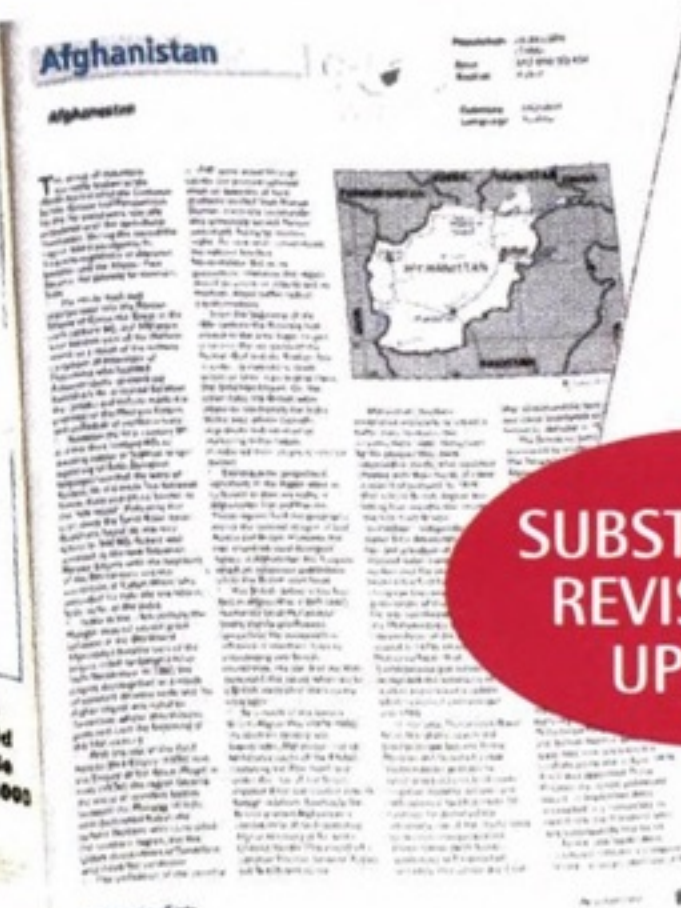
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